A

DIALOGUE

OF

POLYGAMY,

Written Originally in *Italian*:

Rendred into *English* by a Person of Quality; and Dedicated to the Author of that well-known Treatise call'd,

Advice to a Son.

LONDON,
Printed for *John Garfeild*, at the *Rolling-Press* for *Pictures*, neer the *Royal Exchange* in *Cornhill*, over against *Popes-head Alley*, 1657.

986.10

To that ingenious, judicious, free-spirited Gentleman, the Authour of that well-known Book, lately published under the Title of, *Advice to a Son.*

Worthy Sir,

HAving rendred this short Discourse of Polygamy into English, I could not devise to whom, I might

more fitly Dedicate the same, than to your ingenious and free-spirited Self; and in and by You, to all other Gentlemen of like Noble and manly temper, so much (and that deservedly) magnified by * Charron, as a principal accomplishment of that Wise-man, whom he so excellently de-

* In his Book of *Wisdom.*

deſcribes. For indeed, this Treatiſe requires ſuch Readers. As for Pædantic and vulgar Spirits, *I warne them to ſtand a loof, leſt they breake their ſhins upon it, make ſowre faces, and hail upon the Authour a thouſand Cenſures and Reproaches, part of whoſe burthen, I*

am like to bear, for teaching him to speak English. *Yet the Discourse it self, asserts nothing, positively determines nothing; only, the chief and most considerable, if not all, the Texts of holy Scripture, and Arguments from Reason, and the Lawes and Customes of Nations,*

that

that have been, or can be brought for, or againſt Polygamy, *are urged and Anſwered interchangeably, by the two Perſons of the Dialogue; and the Authour being one, is a ſtiffe Pleader for* Monogamy, *& fighter againſt* Polygamy. *The Point it ſelf is left free and undeter-*

mined, to the understanding & conscience of the serious and judicious Reader: And therefore, I know not why any discreet person, (what ever he thinks of the Point) should find himself offended at this Discourse: But that, as it was publickly printed, and vended

at

Dedicatory.

at Basil, *a renowned Protestant City, in* Switzerland, *in the year* 1563. *so it may in our famous* London, *without offence to a judicious Reader: And the blessing of God, Almighty and only Wise, go along with it,* Amen.

Daphnis and *Chloe*: A most sweet and pleasant Pastoral Romance for young Ladies. By *George Thornley* Gent. Sold by *John Garfield* at the *Printing-presse* for *Pictures* in *Cornhil*, near the *Royal Exchange*, over against *Popes-head-alley*.

Lehrbuch der Physik

THE STATIONER TO THE READER.

Courteous Reader,

I Desire thee to take notice, that by *Polygamy* or *Plurality of wives*, handled in this Treatise, is not meant that base practise of certain impudent, shark-

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ing rogues, whose manner is, to marry a Wife in one City or town, and devoure her Substance, and abuse her Body, and then run away to some far distant place, and marry another, leaving the first, with po-poverty, shame, and, it may be, a great Belly to boot,

boot; to be ſure, ſorrow enough, at *Weeping Croſs*: & when they have ſerved a ſecond, wth the like fourſauce, They remove their Quarters & make bold with a third, till the Gallowes catch them. For ſuch hard-hearted and injurious Rogues and vagabonds, are by

the

the Laws of this Nation to be punished wth death, & that (I conceive) more justly then common thievs & robbers. But the Subject Question of this Treatise is, *Whether he that* (if the Law of the Land gave way) *should with the Consent of his first Wife, upon just grounds*

to the Reader,
grounds and reaſons marry a ſecond, being able to provide ſufficiently for them & their children, and living with them as becomes a Man and an Husband: The Queſtion I ſay of this Treatiſe, is, *Whether this Man in ſo doing, ſhould offend againſt any Law of God in the*
holy

holy Scriptures recorded, or againſt the Law of Nature and right Reaſon, implanted by God in the Hearts of mankind. Read the Treatiſe ſoberly and impartially, as in the fear of God, and pray that he will give thee underſtanding in all things, Farewel.

Thine to ſerve thee,
John Garfeild.

An *Advertisement* to the Reader, touching the *Author* of these following Dialogues, concerning *Polygamy* and *Divorce*.

Friendly Reader,

THE *Author of these following Dialogues* Bernardinus Ochinus *by name, was born at* Siena,

na *a City of* Tuſcanie, *a* Province *in* Italy. *He was bred a Fryar as* Luther *was, and having a good induſtrious wit, proved an excellent Scholar; and in proceſs of time, God ſo opened his eyes, that he diſcovered the Impoſtures & Idolatries of Popery, and thereupon left his*

his Covent and the Romiſh Church together, and fled to, and ſojourned for his ſafety and further edification among the reformed Churches of Switzerland, & Geneva. He wrote divers ingenious and acute Treatiſes, by way of Dialogue, in the Italian tongue, for the greater profit of his

Countrymen, Whose edification he rather aimed at than to make ostentation of his own learning, and parts by delivering himself in Latin, His Dialogues *touching* Predestination, *were long ago rendred into* English, *and published in print, Which I remember I have seen in the old* English

gliſh *Character*, *printed I gueſs about the beginning of the Reign of of* Q. Elizabeth, *if not in the daies of* K. Edward, *for I have not the Book by me. After his forſaking the Papacy, he entred into the ſtate of marriage, as* Luther *likewiſe did.*

If theſe Dialogues

logues *here pre-*
ſented, ſhal be gen-
tly accepted, poſſibly
thou maye ſt receive
hereafter ſome o-
ther Pieces of his;
if any ſhall be
thought ſerviceable
for thee. Mean
while, Farwel and
enjoy what thou
haſt, ſoberly, and
thankefully.

A DIALOGUE OF Polygamy.

Between *Telypeligamus* and *Ochinus*.

I Desire your advice; which because I conceive you are both able and willing to afford me: therefore it is I address my self unto you.

Och. I am indeed willing, provided it be within the reach of my understanding and ability.

Tel. In the first place, I beg of you, That you will faithfully promise to keep my Counsel.

Och. I am content, if I may do it, without dishonouring God.

Tel. I have a Wife not suitable

to my minde, so that I cannot love her, and as far as I can perceive, she is both barren, and unhealthful; and I finde my self so disposed, that I cannot want the Company of a Woman: also I desire to have Children, both for Posterities sake, and that I may instruct them in the fear of God. I could indeed keep a Concubine or two, but my Conscience will not suffer me: also I could falsly charge my Wife with Adultery, and so put her away; but in so doing, I should both offend God, and blemish mine own, and my Wives reputation, which I will not do. I could also poyson her, which is a thing I abhorre. But a thought is come into my minde, to take another Wife, so as to keep her that I have already, notwithstanding; and I conceive God has put this into my minde, and that I am thereunto called by him: my desire therefore is, that you will tell me whether, according to the word of God, I may lawfully do it.

Och.

Och. In doubtful cases 'tis fit to take advice, but the case is clear, that a man ought not to have more Wives then one, because the condition of Mariage is such, that it cannot be between more then two.

Tel. How can you make that appear?

Och. God at the beginning made out of *Adam*, only one Woman, and gave her to him; signifying, that he ought to have but one and that Matrimony ought to be only of two persons. If he would have had a Man to have more Wives, he would doubtless have made him more, especially at the beginning of the World, when propagation was more necessary, then ever afterwards. *Gen.* 2.

Tel. I conceive, this Argument is of small validity. God gave to our first Father *Adam* one Wife, therefore it is unlawful for any man to have more.

Och. If it had been the will of God that he should have more, he

would have given him more, especially in that state of perfection, wherein he was pleased to put him.

Tel. A bare act of God, without any precept added thereunto, does not oblige us to imitate the same; for if so, then we are bound to weare Coats of Skin, because God so cloathed our first Parents, and it were unlawful to wear Cloth or Silk. For your Argument would alwayes be of force.

*Gen.*3. God cloathed them with Skins, and he could have cloathed them with Cloth or Silk, if it had been his pleasure, that men should be so cloathed. If an Act of God alone do bind us as much as a precept, so that Gods giving *Adam* one Wife only, were as much in effect, as if he had said to him, I will and command, that every man have one only Wife, it wou'd follow, that not only it should be unlawful for a man to have more Wives then one, but that every man that did not take a Wife, it being

being in his power so to do, should sin, which is contrary to the Doctrine of St. *Paul*.

Och. You must understand, that *Paul* is not contrary to God. For in that, God gave only one Wife to *Adam*, it was all one, as if he had said, I would not have a man to have more Wives then one, and it is my pleasure, that he have *one*, unless I shall call him to a single life, and give him the gift of Chastity, and that is the intent of *Paul*. 1 *Cor*. 7.

Tel. And I for my part must say, that when God gave *Adam* one Wife, it was as if he had said, It is my pleasure, that a man shall have one Wife; if either he want the gift of continency, or I shall call him to a married condition. It is also my pleasure, that he shall have no more; unless he stand in need of more, or I shall call him to more: which is at this time my condition, who stand in need of, and am called to marrie another.

Och. That a single life is pleasing to God, the word of God shewes; but we are not thereby taught, that he is pleased, Men should have more then one Wife.

Och. Nay verily, both Gods word, and the Saints example, do teach the same, as we shall shew by and by. But go to; suppose, it had been Gods pleasure, that every man should have so many Wives, as it was possible for him rightly to govern, and instruct together with their Children: how many Wives must he have given *Adam*, thereby to signifie his pleasure in this point?

Och. You suppose that which cannot be, seeing the having more Wives than one, is repugnant to true Matrimony.

Tel. You have not yet made it clear to me, that to have more Wives then one is repugnant to Mariage, otherwise then by saying, that God gave *one* to *Adam*. Let us now suppose he had given him

him more; doubtleſs, from that firſt Inſtitution you could not prove, that a man ought not to have more; nay, it would follow of neceſſity, that a man might have more. How many Wives therefore in ſuch a caſe, had it been neceſſary for God to give *Adam*, to ſignifie his pleaſure in this point?

Och. Two would have been enough.

Tel. Now then, if that Action of his had bin a præcept, as you ſay, it would have bin unlawful for men to have had more or leſs then two Wives: which nevertheleſs, would not have been anſwerable to his will, ſeeing his intent was, that they ſhould have as many as they could govern. We muſt therefore confeſs, that by a bare act of God no command being added, we are not obliged to the imitation thereof. Otherwiſe it would be ſin for a Miniſter to celebrate the Lords Supper, unleſs the Communicants were juſt

so many in number, as the Apostles of Christ were, when he instituted the same.

Och. Although it does not necessarily follow, that because God gave one Wife to *Adam*, therefore it is unlawful for a man to have more; yet is it doubtless, a very probable Argument, to perswade, & urges strongly, though it be not altogether compulsive.

Tel. Nay verily, it urges not at all: since it may be said, that God gave one Wife to *Adam*, not to shew that his will was, that every man should have but one Wife; but that the rest of man-kind, being born as well of one Mother, as one Father, might love one another so much the more: also that *Eve* being made of the Rib of *Adam*, might be a figure of the holy Church, the onely Spouse of Christ.

Och. Go to, let us come unto the words of the Text. Do you not think that *Adam* was moved by divine instinct, when he said;

For

For this cause shall a man leave his Father, and Mother, and cleave to his Wife?

Tel. Without doubt.

Och. Do you not see how, in saying, he shall cleave to his Wife, (not, Wives) he teaches us, that a man is to have but one?

Tel. Very good, when God commands a man to love his Neighbour, does he oblige him to love one or more?

Och. All that are his Neighbours.

Tel. That's false; for he sayes, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour, not thy Neighbours; and therefore whoever loves one of his Neighbours, has fulfilled that Command.

Och. Christ, when he said, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour*, spoke it in this sense, as if he should have said, Thou shalt love every one that is thy Neighbour.

Tel. So likewise *Adam*, when he said: *he shall cleave unto his Wife*, did intimate, that he should

cleave unto every one that shall be his Wife; And therefore it cannot be proved by those words, that it is unlawful for a man to have more Wives then one.

Och. But what will you say to those following words of his: *and of them twain shall be made one flesh?* for he does not say, of three or four. From these words it is doubtless manifest, that God would not have Marriage to be made between more then two.

Gen. 2.

Tel. *Adam* sayes not, that of them two shall be made one flesh; but, *they shall be made one Flesh.*

Och. But that was his meaning, as plainly appeares from the words of Christ, who citing the said speech, sayes, that God by *Adam* declared, *And they two shall be one Flesh*, adding moreover, this following clause: *They are no longer two, but one Flesh.*

Mat. 19.

Tel. It is as if he had said, The Husband shall love every one of his Wives, as if she were the same flesh, and the same body with him:

him; and so likewise, shall every Wife love her Husband.

Och. But God said, they two shall be one: therefore there cannot be three or foure.

Tel. You were in the right, if he had said, They two (only) shall be one. And therefore, as this Argument is of no force; Christ said, *If two of you on Earth shall agree about a thing, they shall obtain what they aske*: therefore if three or foure shall agree, they shall not obtain the same: so is this no good inference; God said, *They two shall be one Flesh*: therefore if there be three, it is no true Marriage. *Mat.* 18.

Och. It is impossible for more then two, to become one flesh.

Tel. In the primitive Church, there were not only two believers, but they were in great numbers, having nevertheless one soul, and one mind; and you believe, if a man had divers Wives, he could not become one flesh with them. If a man, while he cleaves

unto

unto an Harlot, becomes as *Paul* sayes, one body with her, although he have a Wife, should he not much more become one flesh with her, if he should make her his Wife?

Och. Say what you will: To have more then one Wife, is a thing filthy, dishonest, and quite contrary, and destructive to the holy State of Matrimony.

Tel. And yet you know, that *Abraham* had more Wives then one; as also *David*, and many other men under the old Testament; who, in case it had been unlawful for them, to have more then one Wife, they should have sinned in marrying divers Women; and the Children which they had by all their Wives, excepting the first, should have been Bastards, because not begotten in lawful Matrimony.

Och. I will sooner grant all that you have said, then I will allow, or grant it lawful for one man to have more then one Wife. Those An-

Ancients were holy men; yet did they sometimes sin. They were sinners, as being born of *Adam*, as appeares in the example of *David*; and they should have deceived themselves, if they had denyed themselves to be sinners.

Tel. That they sometimes sinned, I shall easily grant; but I will never yield, that they continued in their sins, till their day of death: which nevertheless they did, in case it was unlawful for them to have divers Wives. Whence it would follow, that they were all damned, as those who die while they keep a Concubine. As for us, we cannot hold them for Saints, seeing we know not for certain, that they ever repented. When *David* had committed those same Acts of Adultery and Murther, because he was one of Gods Elect, God sent his Prophet to him, to reprove him: as also when he numbred the People, contrary to the Command

mand of God. Credible therefore it is, that if to have divers Wives, had been contrary to the Law of God, God would have used the like proceedings towards him, that he might not be damned. But though you read the whole Bible over, you shall never finde, that God has forbad the having of divers Wives. And yet, if it had bin a thing unlawful, *Moses* would never have dissembled the matter. Moreover, the Scriptures tell us, that *David* was a man after Gods own heart, and that he was obedient to all the Lords Commandements, all his life long, save in the matter of *Uriah*. So that had it been a sin to have divers Wives, seeing that also had been sufficiently known, the Authour would have excepted it, or he must doubtless, make himself a lyar; by saying, that *David* committed only that sin of *Homicide*, under which his Adultery is comprehended. Again, how could that be true, which God said to *David*, when

when blaming him for his unthankfulneſs he told him, that he had given him many Wives? which queſtionleſs, muſt have bin all Whores, except the firſt, and ſo it had not bin God, but the Devil that gave them unto him. Moreover, you ſhall finde, that God made a Law, that if any man had two Wives, the one beloved, the other hated; and had by them divers Children, the eldeſt of which, was the ſon of the hated Wife, it ſhould not be allowed the Father, to make the Sonne of his beloved Wife his Heire. Now it might fall out, that the beloved Wife might be his firſt Wife, and ſo it ſhould come to paſſe, that though the Husband had Children by the latter, ſooner then by the firſt, yet they ſhould be Baſtards, if your opinion be true, and born of an Whore, and therefore ought not to be Heires. It is therefore clear by the word of God, that all the Children are legitimate, though ſprung from di-

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vers wives by one and the same Husband; and that therefore not only the first, but the following marriages are lawful, seeing God did both approve and blesse them, in those holy men the first Fathers of the world.

Och. The first thing, which you say follows from my opinion, that all which died having many wives should be damned. I answer: If they are dead not having divorced all save their first wife; or without repenting of their sin, they are all damned. But as many of them as are saved did repent and put away all but their first and lawful wife.

Tel. But, it is not apparent, that ever any did that; and yet if your opinion were true, mention ought to have been made thereof in the holy Scriptures, that we might know and understand, That to keep divers wives, is an abominable thing.

Och.

Och. It was already known, that men ought not to have more wives then one, because God had commanded that the Husband and the wife, should of two become one-flesh.

Tel. It is not likely that it was unlawful to have divers wives, and that the unlawfulness thereof was known, and *Abraham*, and *Jacob*, and *David*, and other worthy persons like them, should nevertheless marry more wives then one.

Och. That's a good one! As if many holy men in ancient times did not sin, though they knew what they did, was unlawful.

Tel. But they did not continue to their lives end in those sins, as those that married more wives then one, did.

Och. I told you before that if they were of the number of Gods Elect, they did at last repent.

Tel.

Tel. But we ought no longer to reckon the Patriarchs for examples sake to be Saints, seeing we are assured that they sinned in having many wives; but we are not assured of their repentance.

Och. True, unlesse the word of God assures us that they were Saints: as we know (for example sake) *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob* to be Saints, because Christ said, that *many should come from the East, and from the West, and sit down with* Abraham, Isaac *and* Jacob, *in the Kingdom of Heaven.* Now, I conceive, that as *Moses* because of the hardness of their hearts, suffered the Jews to put away their wives without just cause, so for the same cause he suffered them to have sundry wives, that is to say, he did not forbid or hinder it, nor punish the same by any Law enacted in his Commonwealth. But it follows not therefore, that they did not sin in Gods sight, and that they did not deserve

ſerve puniſhment unleſſe they repented.

Tel. That thing is permitted, which is neither puniſhed, nor hindred, nor forbidden. Truly, I will not ſay *Moſes* ſinned, if to avoid a greater evil, and to comport with the hardneſs of the Jewes hearts, he permitted them to have divers wives; that is to ſay, he did not puniſh or hinder them. But if he permitted them ſo as not to forbid them, I cannot but ſay, he ſinned. For *Moſes* ought to have expreſly forbidden, that any man ſhould have more then one wife: which becauſe he has not done, we muſt needs confeſſe that it is not a thing unlawful.

Oeb. The having of many wives, was then (as it is now) ſo apparently filthy, diſhoneſt, and vitious, that it was needleſs for *Moſes* to forbid the ſame.

Tel.

Tel. And was it not as apparent, that Adultery was a thing filthy, dishoneſt, vicious? yea, much more then the having of many wives, and yet he expreſly forbad adultery. But in caſe it had been unlawful to have many wives, he ought to have forbidden that, ſo much the more expreſly, by how much the unlawfulneſſe thereof, was leſſe maniſeſt then the unlawfulneſſe of Adultery was. Is it not a clear caſe, that Homicide is unlawful, and yet he forbids that. In a word, What are the ten Commandements, but an Expreſſion of the Law of Nature?

Och. It may be ſaid, that God might remit the tranſgreſſions againſt the ſecond Table, becauſe he is above, not only all Creatures, but his own Law: and peradventure he might remit the ſame to all mankind born before the death of Chriſt; and conſequently be willing, that they might

might have more wives then one, without sin. And so it comes to pass, that those under the Old Testament that had many wives, did not sin; and under that consideration, God might give many wives to *David*. Though it may also be said, that he gave them to him, that is, permitted him to have them, in as much as he neither hindred, nor punisht him.

Tel. That it is unlawful to keep more wives then one, if your opinion be true, is clear from the word of God, who said, *that two should be made one flesh*; but that God did so far remit of his Laws, that men should not sin in having more, does not appear in the word of God; that opinion therefore of yours, has no foundation.

Och. If you consider well, you shall finde that *Lamech* a very wicked man, was the first that had two Wives. Other holy men that

that preceeded him, knowing the will of God, had onely one a piece.

Tel. As if that *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, were not more holy then those very men you speak of. But, in the first place, I cannot tell how you came to know that *Lamech* was the first man that had two wives, although he be the first man whom the Scripture mentions to have had two. But as this is a vain Argument, The Scripture no where mentions, that *Cain* had more then one Son; therefore, doubtlesse he had no more: so, as vain is this which follows: It is no where in Scripture recorded, that those men that lived before *Lamech*, had more wives then one: therefore none of them had above one wife. Moreover, where it is said, that *Lamech* had two wives, it is not charged upon him as a sin, but seems rather to be set down as a thing pleasing to God, that a man should

ſhould have more wives then one, ſeeing by them he gave *Lamech* ſuch ingenious Sons, as proved the inventors of Arts, both delightful and profitable. Neither can I ſee how you came informed, that *Lamech* was ſo wicked a man, as you talk of.

Och. God plagued him, by ſuffering him to fall into the ſins of murther and deſperation, only becauſe he had married two wives.

Tel. But I cannot ſee, either that he was a murtherer or fell into deſpair; neither does the Scripture teach any ſuch thing, if it be rightly interpreted: Or if the Scripture had intimated any ſuch thing, (which I do not grant) yet does it not thereby appear, that God ſuffered him ſo to ſlip, becauſe he had married two wives.

Och. But we may conjecture, that his having two wives diſpleaſed

pleased God, seeing his murther is presently after mentioned.

Tel. In the first place, I have already told you, that by the words of that Text, if they be rightly understood, there is no signification made, that either he was a man-slayer, or in desperation; and if such a thing were intimated, it does not therefore follow, that his plurality of wives was the cause thereof, or that God was offended with him therefore; inasmuch as presently upon the mention of his two wives, he commends their Sons, as if he would give us to understand, that he approves of plurality of wives. Add hereunto, that nothing ought to be affirmed or avouched in the Church of God, as necessary to salvation, if it cannot otherwise be known, save by conjectures only.

Och. Seeing I cannot convince you out of the old Testament, I will try what I can do from the New.

Tel.

Tel. You are in an errour if you think the Old Testament is not sufficient to teach us all things necessary to salvation. If therefore that be the cause you betake your self to the New, you are deceived, seeing as *Paul* writes, *All Scripture of Divine inspiration is profitable for reprehension, correction and instruction, in righteousness, that the man of God may be made perfect, furnished for every good work.* Now clear it is, that *Paul* in that place speaks of those Scriptures, in which *Timothy* was exercised from a child. And because the new Testament was not then written, you must be forced to confesse, that *Paul* in that place speaks of the Old. The old Testament therefore is profitable, not only to assert the truth of such things as are necessary to salvation, but also to confute falsities: and consequently to render a man perfect. For which cause, Christ speaking thereof said, *Search the Scriptures for in them is found eternal life.*

Och. Perhaps ſomethings are forbidden to us in the New Teſtament, which were not forbidden to them in the Old.

Tel. In moral matters, verily what ever is unlawful and to us forbidden, was in like manner evermore forbidden to them; and whatever was allowed and commanded to them, the ſame is in like manner allowed and commanded to us. God was equally Author of the old Teſtament as well as of the New; nor was he ever contrary, or unlike himſelf.

Och. That was allowed to thoſe under the old Teſtament, becauſe of their imperfection, which is not allowed to us, in whom carnal deſires ought to be much more mortified.

Tel. You take that for granted which you have not proved, *viz.* That it is unlawful to have more wives then one. Moreover, you are

are deceived, if you think, that it is a bad thing to have one wife, but worse to have two; For as the Act matrimonial, in him that has one wife, is a thing not in it self evil, nor repugnant to those actions, that are necessary to salvation: no more is it to have two wives, provided a man have a call from God to marry them, and be moved, not by the impulse of the flesh, but of the Spirit, that he may have children, and bring them up in the fear of God; his wife likewise doing the same. Whence it follows, that he may be as perfect that has two wives, as he that has but one or none. Nor had *Abraham*, because he had divers wives lesse Faith, Hope, or Charity, then Priests, Monks, or Friars that have none. Conjugal Chastity, is as well the gift of God, as that of a single State. For this cause *Paul* said, Every one is endued with his own gift from God, some one way, some another. 1 *Cor.* 7.

Och. In that place, the Apostle exhorted the *Corinthians* to a single Life, and that for no other cause, but that a married estate has many incumbrances attending the same: in as much as married people, being intangled with worldly affairs, are not so free to pray, and preach up and down, and do good to others, as single people are. Now, if so be the having of one wife, do bring so many impediments, any one may soon conjecture, what the having of divers wives will do. And therefore to have more wives then one is unlawful.

Tel. You are in an error if you think, that the mind of *Paul* in those words was, that marriage was a stop to mens journey to Heaven, so that married people could not be saved; For then that which God said, would not be true, *viz.* That it was not good for a man to be alone; but it would rather be an excellent thing

Gen. 2.

thing to be alone; and to marry a wife, the worſt thing in the world, becauſe in ſo doing a man ſhould ſin. Moreover, I acd, that not only a married man may be ſaved, as well as a Bachelour, but be as perfect as he, inaſmuch as he may attain as great perfection in Faith, Hope, and Charity as the other. And if he cannot perſonally performe ſome externall works which the ſingle man can, as hindred by his married eſtate, yet he may in mind perform the ſame, and that is it which God regards.

Och. Though Matrimony do not hinder a man from going to God; yet the having of more wives then one, does.

Tel, How prove you that?

Och. From *Paul*, who ſpeaking of Biſhops, ſayes, he would have them to be the husbands of one wife, meaning that they ſhould

have no more. It is therefore unlawful to have more wives then one.

Tel. Nay rather when he tells them, by name, that they should have one, left having more, they should be too much distracted with worldly businesse, 'tis easie to see that he allows other men to have more.

Oeh. Some do thus interpret the mind of *Paul*, A Bishop is to have but one wife, that is (say they) one Church for his spiritual Spouse.

Tel. Many reasons shew that to be a false opinion. First, because Christ only is the Spouse of Souls and Bridegroome of his Church. And if we that are ministers be his friends, we ought with *John Baptist*, as the friends of Christ, the only true Spouse of Souls, to send them to him their Bridegroom: and not to draw them

them to our ſelves. The Churches therefore of Chriſt are not the Biſhops Spouſes. And if they were, as the Husband is ſuperiour to his Wife, ſo ſhould they be to their reſpective Churches, againſt which *Paul* writes to the *Corinthians*, where he ſayes, *We are not Lords over your faith, or over you, by reaſon of your Faith.* The Church therefore is not *Pauls* Wife. I confeſs indeed, that one Church is enough for one Paſtor, and he does no ſmall matter, if he can govern that well. In the ancient times of Chriſtianity, one Church ſometimes had divers Paſtors, as appeares from the Epiſtle to the *Philippians*, in which *Paul* ſalutes the Biſhops, which were at *Philippi*: whereas now a dayes one Biſhop has many Churches. Moreover, when *Paul* ſayes A Biſhop ought to have one Wife, he ſpeaks of the manners of him that was fit to be a Biſhop. But if he be yet to be choſen, he is no Biſhop; and therefore has no Church as

yet, that might be called his wife. Hereby also it is manifest, that by Wife, he did not mean Church, because presently almost after those words, he makes mention of his Children, commanding that he govern his Family well, and have his Children subject to him, with all Reverence. For if a man cannot govern his own Family, how can he oversee the Church of God? In that place therefore he speaks of a Wife, and not of a Church.

Och. Some say, that *Paul* in that place, forbids such men to be chosen Bishops, who have had divers Wives, though not at one and the same time.

Tel. But I do not conceive, that *Paul* counted it sin after the death of a mans first wife, to take a second; for as much as he himself sayes, that after the death of the Husband, the wife is free, and may without blame marry another.

ther. So far is it from being unlawful for a man, after the death of his wife, to marry another.

Och. They say, 'tis a shameful thing, when a mans first wife is dead, to marry another.

Tel. If you weigh the matter rightly, and follow not the Opinion of the blind vulgar people, you shall finde that the matrimonial Act, is as free from turpitude, as the actions of eating and drinking; not would God have commanded Matrimony, if it had been evil, which nevertheless he did, when he said, Increase and propagate.

Och. I condemn not Matrimony, but the Iteration, or Repetition thereof.

Tel. The second Matrimony, is as true and valid as the first; and therefore you cannot condemn the Iteration of Matrimony, but

you must withall, condemn Matrimony it self. Take an Example. A young man marries a Wife, she dies a few dayes after, he is somewhat incontinent, or is again called to a married condition: who knowes not, that he according to the Precept of *Paul*, seeing he cannot contain, ought to take another Wife.

Och. Unless second Mariages were filthy, and unlawful, *Paul* would never, speaking afterwards of Widows, have commanded such to be chosen, as had only one Husband.

Tel. Think you that *Paul* was superstitious?

Och. I do not think he was.

Tel. If a young Widow, somewhat incontinent, had asked *Pauls* advice, what think you
1 *Tim.* 5. *Pauls* answer would have bin?

Och.

Och. That she should marry again, according to his own Doctrine.

Tel. It is not therefore unlawful to marry again. Why then should *Paul* reject such Widows, as had had more Husbands then one? for it was possible that some Widow having had divers Husbands, might be more holy and honest, then they which had had but one. Also it might fall out, that she which had had divers Husbands, might live but one year with them: whereas the rest that had never had more then one, might have lived with him, thirty or forty years. In such a case truly, I cannot see why they should be more worthy to be chosen then she. I do therefore believe, that the mind of *Paul* in that place was this, that such Widows were not to be chosen that had had many Husbands, that is to say, who being divorced, had married again: their former Husbands who di-

divorced them being yet alive. For either they were divorced upon a juſt ground, and then it was not fit they ſhould be choſen; or upon an unjuſt ground, and ſo the Matrimony remained good, having never bin violated: and then the divorced woman had ſinned, if ſhe married to another. By which meanes it came to paſſe, that all women divorced were infamous, not only ſuch as married to other men; but ſuch likewiſe as abſtained from Mariage, eſpecially amongſt the Gentiles, who were not wont to divorce them, ſave for ſome fault or vitious quality. *Paul* therefore did never condemn thoſe Women, who their former Husband being dead married another, nor did he forbid them to be Biſhops, who their former Wife being dead, married another, which notwithſtanding, the ſuperſtitious Papiſts obſerve, becauſe they underſtood not the meaning of *Paul*. Though a man have kept divers Whores, they

make

make him a Bishop; but if his first Wife being dead, he marry another, they will not: whence it comes to passe, that Matrimony amongst them is of worse report, then Fornication, Adultery, Incest, Sacriledge, Sodomie, and all imaginable abominations. This is therefore the mind of *Paul* (and this will make the third opinion) as has bin said of Widows, that he who has had divers Wives, because he divorced one, ought not to be made a Bishop. For if he divorc't her unjustly, he ought not to be a Bishop in that regard; if justly, yet the Infamy of his wife, redounding upon himself; for that cause *Paul* would not have him be a Bishop. Howbeit, I like not this Opinion; for he does not say, he must have bin, but that he must be the Husband of one wife: for he sayes, he must be unblamed, *viz.* as the Husband of one Wife: as he expressed it a little afterwards, touching Deacons, and writing to *Titus* about Bishops.

Och.

Och. Becauſe a Biſhop, in regard of the publick Office he beareth; as alſo the Deacons, have to do with all perſons, not only with Men, but alſo with Women; to avoid ſuſpicion, *Paul* would that they ſhould be married; and this perhaps might be the meaning of thoſe words. Alſo, it may be, that *Paul* fore-eeing the Superſtition of the Papiſts, who would forbid the Marriage of Biſhops, that they might be without excuſe, he ſaid, they ought to be blameleſs, and to have a wife, but that they ſhould have no more then one, he did not ſay. Or he ſhewes, that a Biſhop ought to have a wife, that is, he ought to be content with her, and not to have any thing to do with other Women, which is, as if he had ſaid, that he ought to be honeſt.

Tel. The mind of *Paul* is this, that it is lawful for the generality of Chriſtians, to have many Wives; but for Biſhops to have only

only every man one, not because it had bin a sin for them to have more; but because the duty of Bishops being to labour for the salvation of others, he feared lest multiplicity of Wives should be a pul-back, and hinder them from performing their Office, as they ought to do. For this cause he would have them to have but one: nor is it therefore unlawful for other men to have more. Yea verily, while he forbids Bishops and Deacons to have more then one, he closely allowes it to other men. Nor is it likely *Paul* would have forbidden Bishops to have more Wives then one, had it not bin the Custom of those times for them to have more. It was therefore in the new Testament forbidden to Bishops to have many Wives, as it was in the old Testament forbidden to Kings; not because it was in it self unlawful, but lest Kings, whose Office was of greatest consequence, being distracted by their Wives, should be *Deut.* 17.

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corrupted, as it happened to *Solomon*; for if *Adam*, when he had but one, was notwithstanding perverted by her, 'tis eaſie to conjecture what might happen to Kings, if they ſhould have many. Yet do I believe nevertheleſs, that as in the ſame place he forbad Kings to have many Horſes, that is too great a multitude, leaſt he ſhould put his truſt in them, rather then in God; for otherwiſe they were allowed to have many Horſes; even ſo, they were not forbid to have many Wives, ſeeing *David* a moſt holy man, had many; but that they ſhould not have an immoderate multitude, eſpecially ſuch as were Heathens, and Worſhippers of falſe Gods. To return therefore to our buſineſs, 'tis not credible, that *Paul* feared, leſt *Timothy* ſhould chooſe for Biſhops, ſuch as were *Gentiles* or *Jewes*, not baptized. There were therefore in the Church of Chriſt, and among the Chriſtians, ſuch as had more wives then one.

And

And because from among them a Bishop was to be chosen: he would not have him choose one that had divers wives. But if to keep more wives then one, had bin contrary to the Law of God, as you say it is, and the first Wife only were right and true, the rest Harlots: 'tis not credible, that the Christians would have baptized any one that had plurality of wives, unless he had put away all saving his first. And if that had bin the practise, it had bin in vain for *Paul* to command, that he that was to be chosen Bishop, should be the Husband of one Wife, seeing Christians out of the number of whom the Bishop was chosen, had but each of them one a peece. But this I much marvail at, that many who have sometimes written and do believe, that to have more Wives then one, is repugnant to the divine Law, both moral and natural, and yet in expounding *Paul*, they say, that he writing to *Timothy*, warns him

him to take heed, that he choose not a Bishop that had plurality of wives; whence it follows, that seeing Election was not to be made of any out of the Church of God, that there were in Gods Church such as had more wives then one; and consequently, counted it not unlawful to have more. Otherwise, if they had counted it unlawful, as they did not Baptize, or admit unto the Lords Supper any man that kept a Concubine, unless he would forsake her: in like manner they would not have Baptized, nor admitted to the Supper, nor suffer'd amongst them such as had many wives, unless they would divorce all save the first.

Och. But what do you say to *Paul* who wills and commands, That every man should have his own wife? for in saying his own wife he excludes wives.

Tel. Some say, his meaning is, Let

Let every man have his own wife: that is, his own, not another mans: and not, only one. As if some Father making shew of his Daughter, should say, This is my own Daughter; not denying that he has more Daughters, that are likewise his own.

Och. In the same place the same *Paul* commands, That the Wife have her own proper Husband, that is to say, such a Wife as is proper to him alone, and not in common with other wives. Whence it follows, That as a woman ought to be proper to her husband, and not to belong to other husbands: so the man ought to be appropriated to his first wife, and not common to others: provided, you will (as you ought) expound the words of *Paul*, so as he may not contradict himself.

Tel. *Paul* does not there dispute, whether an husband may have

have plurality of wives, or no; but his intent is to shew, that such men as have not the gift of continence, should take them wives; and that women in the like case should marry.

Och. Is it possible that you should not see, that plurality of wives, is repugnant to the matrimonial contract, in which the man grants his wife, and the woman her husband, an honest use of their respective Bodies for ever? For which cause also *Paul* sayes, That neither the man nor the woman have power over their own Bodies, but each of one another's. And in case a man have given the honest use of his Body to his wife, he can no longer give it to another, because he has already given it to the first.

Tel. Yes, by the permission of the first he may, as *Abraham* did, when by the permission of *Sarah*, he married *Hagar*, and consequent

quently by permission of the first and second, he may marry a third, which is true of other men as well as *Abraham*: especially the wives being instructed that it is no sin for their husbands, with their consent to marry other wives.

Och. Do you believe, that *David* when he married *Bathsheba*, did it with consent of his other wives, and that others who married divers wives, did so likewise.

Tel. Suppose they did not; yet were not their marriages the less true and lawful. For it was then a thing commonly known, and confirmed by example, That it was lawful for a man to have many wives. Therefore when a man by marriage, gave the use of his Body to his wife, he did not so totally give the same, as to bereave himself of all power to give it to other wives also: which the wives

wives knew well enough by the publick custome then in force; and thereunto the wives did silently give consent, seeing their husbands married them with this condition being understood. Their marriages therefore were good and lawful.

Osh. An husband cannot marry a second wife without detriment to his first. It is not therefore credible, that wives did in their hearts consent, that their husbands should marry others.

Tel. It is possible my wife may prove barren; in which case, it is her duty to consent that I should take another; yea and of her own consent to exhort me thereunto, as *Sarah* did of old. And if she would not approve thereof, this will of hers were unjust, and so it were lawful for her husband to marry another, contrary to her unjust mind. Also when a woman is with Child, and some-

time

time after she is brought to bed, seeing she is then unfit for procreation, as also when she is old and sick, her husband may without injury to her, have to do with another wife; yea, though a mans wife were sound, and fit for generation, yet she ought to take it in good part, if enjoying the company of her husband at some certain times, as it is with other living Creatures, she leave it free for him to enjoy the carnal acquaintance of his other wives.

Och. Do you think it lawful for one wife to have many husbands?

Tel. No.

Och. And yet there are sick Men, as well as sick women. Also a woman is able to have to do with more men, then a man can with women. Whence it seems more just, for one woman to have divers husbands, or at least lesse

injust

injuſt, then for a man to have many wives.

Tel. Nay rather, ſince Matrimony is chiefly ordained for procreation ſake, and a man having many wives, may in a ſhort time have many more children, then a woman which has plurality of husbands: it is more equitable, that a man have many wives, then that a woman have many husbands. But the chief cauſes why women may not have many husbands, and yet men may have many wives, are theſe. Firſt of all, becauſe, if women ſhould have many husbands, there would follow great diſturbance and confuſion in the world. For ſeeing no husband could certainly know that his children are his own, he might alwaies ſuſpect, that they were ſome other husbands rather then his; and conſequently he would not bring them up, nor inſtruct them, nor take ſuch care for them, as now he does, know-

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ing they are his own, though born of divers wives. Perhaps also being unassured that they are his own, he would not make them his Heirs. Another cause, why it is lawful for men to have many wives, but not for women to have many husbands, is this; The husband is his wives Head, and has authority and command over her, as being her Superiour; for which cause he may have divers wives, provided he can well rule and instruct them all. Nor is it a monstrous, but a comely thing for to have many members in one Body, though there be but one Head; but if the Body should have many Heads, it would be a monster: So for one husband to have many wives, is not mōstrous, but for one wife to have many husbands, is monstrous. And therefore as there would be dissention and discord, if in one Body there were many Heads, & they should be of cōtrary minds, as might well happen: so would there be discords, perturbations, and great inconveniences, if

ſhould have plurality of huſbands, ſeeing it might happen, that they ſhould will things contrary, and command their wives to do them.

Och. If we regard diſcords and inconveniences, we ſhall finde they have been ſomerimes exceeding great, becauſe one man has had two wives: as we ſee in the example of *Sarah* & *Hagar*, *Leah* and *Rachel*, *Hannah* and *Peninnah*, and others, amongſt whom were continual diſſenſiens: wch I conceive, God did therefore ſuffer, to ſhew that he was not pleaſed, that one man ſhould have more then one wife.

Tel. Although among the firſt-born, and other brethren, many times grievious diſcords have aroſe, as appears in *Cain* and *Abel*; *Eſau*, and *Jacob*; and many others: it is not therefore diſpleaſing to God, that Fathers ſhould have many Sons: As alſo between

between Mothers in Law, and Daughters in Law, though there is many times little quiet, yet is not Matrimony therefore displeasing to *God*. In like manner, although among divers wives of the same Husband, there has seldom bin good agreement, yet cannot either Marriage in general, or marriage of sundry wives be condemned; but only those wives, who were not so well disposed as they ought to have bin.

Och. Christians ought in this life to be contemners of pleasures, and to have more of the Spirit, then those men had, which lived under the old Testament. And therefore, though They had many wives, one a peece ought verily to content Us.

Tel. I have already declared, and told you, to cohabit with plurality of Wives, is no unlawful thing, and that it may consist with the greatest degree of faith and

perfection. And therefore I cannot tell how you can be assured, that some Christians are not called by God, to cohabit with divers wives, as well as some Jewes of old were called by Him thereunto.

Och. Say what you will, to have more wives then one, is a thing filthy and dishonest.

Tel. There are two things which bring you into that error. The first is custome; for if it were the Custom for men to have more then one, it would not seem to you blameworthy. Another is a feigned kind of holiness, which makes the having more wives then one, seem to you unlawful, though it be no whit repugnant to the holy Scriptures. Yea, and those that have more wives then one, are wont to be more grievously punished, then they should be, if they kept a thousand Concubines.

Och.

Och. 'Tis hard for one man to content one woman, and you would have it lawful for him to have more.

Tel. An Husband is not obliged to satisfie all the carnal desires of his wife, but such only as are moderated with reason.

Och. Under the old Testament when there were few men in the world, it was peradventure, expedient for men to have more wives; but now the world is full of people, it is not expedient.

Tel. In the first place you know not, whether men if they had more wives, would have many more Children then they have: or if they should beget more Children (as is very likely) how know you that the fruits of the Earth will not suffice to afford them all that shall be necessary for their livelihood, and all other occasions. For the same God that gave

Our Author seems not to have heard or not to have thought, when he wrote thus, of the New-found World, nor of many large Tracts of ground in Hungaria, and other parts of Europe unpeopled.

increase of men, would likewise supply plenty of fruits to nourish and maintain them. But suppose you were assured they should perish with famine, yet the souls of men are of so great price, that we should no wayes hinder their existence, especially if we be called thereto by God, as those holy men of old were, who had plurality of wives.

Och. In these dayes a Christian ought not to have plurality of wives, if for no other cause, at least to avoid the offence which might thence arise, seeing all Christians do account the having of more wives then one, to be a most filthy and Diabolical thing.

Tel. Even as, although men ſhould account Matrimony an unlawful thing, yet ought you not to be moved with their offence taken thereat, but to marry, if need were: ſo ought you to marry more then one, if need be, or you be called thereunto by divine impulſe.

Och. A ſingle man might indeed in ſuch a caſe marry, to avoid fornication, although men ſhould be therewith offended; eſpecially, being called by God thereunto. But he that has one already needs not marry another, nor will God thereunto call him.

Tel. Nay verily; if his wife be ſick, or other impediments ſhall happen, ſo that he cannot enjoy her, and be incontinent, he muſt of neceſſity, to avoid fornication, marry another. Add hereunto, that God does not call men to marry, only for the avoidance of fornication; but chiefly for pro-

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pagation, as of old he called *Abraham*, and other holy men.

Och. Shall I make it clear and manifeſt to you, that the having more wives then one, is a thing forbidden? Chriſt ſayes, if any man put away his wife, ſave for adultery, and ſhall marry another, he commits adultery. But if a man might have more wives then one he ſhould not commit adultery, as Chriſt ſayes, whether he put away his former wife, or no.

Tel. No man can expound thoſe words of Chriſt, better then Chriſt himſelf, who in another place explaining the ſaid words, ſayes, Whoſoever ſhall put away his wife, ſave for adultery, cauſes her to commit adultery, that is to ſay, he gives occaſion to his wife, ſo unjuſtly put away, to commit Adultery. For the wife being by that meanes deprived of her true Husband, cannot marry any other, her former Husband living;

but

but she shall commit adultery. Christ does not therefore say, If any man put away his wife, not for adultery, and marries another, he commits adultery; but that he gives occasion to his repudiated wife to commit adultery.

Och. Both *Matthew*, *Mark*, and *Luke* record, that Christ said, If any man put away his wife, and marry another, he commits adultery, that is to say, by marrying that other. But if his intent was to shew, that by unjustly putting her away, he gave her occasion to commit adultery; it had been sufficient to have said, If any one put away his wife; not adding, *and marry another*. Christ therefore by those words of his in the fifth of *Matthew*, did not intend to explain that passage, which is recorded in the 19. Chapter of the said Evangelist: only he said, If any put away his wife, not for adultery, he makes her to commit adultery. But in the 19. of *Matthew*,

he sayes another thing, *viz.* that if he marry another in the same kind, he commits Adultery, because the first was his wife, and he ought not to have more then one. Add hereunto, that the words of Christ in his Sermon upon the Mount, were uttered before those were, by which he answered the Pharises, when they asked him, Whether a man for every cause might put away his wife. Those former words therefore cannot be an Exposition of those were spoke afterwards.

Tel. Whether the latter words were an Exposition of the former or no; it satisfies me, that his meaning is one and the same in both places, *viz.* that if any man put away his wife without just cause, he occasions her to commit Adultery. And as for those words, which in the 19. Chapter, are added over and above: Christ added them to shew, that a wife unjustly divorced, if she marry another

ther man, commits adultery, though at the same time her former Husband marry another wife, seeing the first Matrimony is not void; but remains in full force. His meaning therefore is this; If he put her away unjustly, though he marry another, yet he gives her that is put away, occasion to commit adultery.

Och. This interpretation of yours, is so forced and strained, that it is in danger of breaking. Moreover, we may see in Creatures irrational, that the Males have their Females, with whom alone they couple, as we see in Birds; and much fitter it is for men, especially Christians, to have the like.

Tel. That is true only in such like Creatures, whose propagation is not very needful, to the maintenance of the life of man. But if you observe, you shall find, that one Cock has many Hens, one Bull many Cowes; and so in other

ther Creatures which are profitable to mankind. If therefore God has ordained for the Commodity of Man-kind, that one Cock should have many Hens, much more has he ordained, that one man should have many wives, for the propagation of men, whom he so highly prizes, and so dearly loves.

Och. If none of those live-Creatures you speak of were guelt, and they should all converse together, you should finde every male with his proper female; and men ought to do the same much more. But now, many of the males being guelt and separated, if one male couple, with divers females; it followes not therefore, that it should be lawful for one man to have many Wives. God put into the Ark of *Noah*, just so many males as females, to shew that every male ought to have only his own single female.

Tol.

Tel. If there were in the world as many Men as Women, I confess it were expedient, that every man should have his own single Wife. But seeing the number of Women is greater, I conceive it fit, that one man have many Wives; for it is not in vain, that *God* makes more Women. If there were in the World, for example sake, only three hundred Women, and as many men, and every man should have one Woman, they could not so soon propagate their kind: as if of six hundred, four hundred were Women, and two hundred men, every one of which should have divers Women. For this cause therefore, *God* ordained, that the number of Women, should be greater then the number of Men. The life of one Man equalls that of two Women.

Och,

Och. In the first place, I do not believe that you know there are more Women in the World then men. Perhaps it seemes so to you, because commonly we rejoyce at the birth of Boyes, and grieve at the birth of Girles. But though there be more Women born into the World, yet they live not long for the most part, by reason of the more tender constitution of their bodies. Add hereunto, that many more men perish then women, by Warres, Shipwrack, and the Sword of justice: that reason therefore does not prove *Polygamy* or plurality of Wives. Moreover, the love of carnal society, is a most violent passion: and if dishonest love cannot endure a Rival, much lesse can that which is honest?

Tol. Holy love rather extends to all, even our enemies.

Och. Jacob was an holy man, and he loved barren *Rachel* more then fruitful *Leah*. So also *Helkanah*

nah loved *Hannah* that was barren, more then *Peninnah* that was fruitful. *Solomon* also said, that his beloved was one. It is therefore an hard thing, to share out a mans love, amongst many Wives, which notwithstanding, must be done in *Polygamy*. When a man has but one Wife, mutual love is better preserved, then if he had more; and if any falling out happen, reconciliation is more easily made. Where there are many Wives, there are divers understandings, divers Constitutions, Distractions and Discords.

Tel. If there were a call from God, there would be his blessing. *Polygamy* is no enemy to charity. And therefore if any man should have plurality of Wives, and love were wanting between them, that were not the fault of *Polygamy*, but of the said Wives.

Och. If the filthy love of an Harlot, is oftentimes the cause, that

that a man is content with her alone, much more ought the holy love of Wedlock, work the same effect.

Tel. We see that filthy love is more effectual in some persons, then holy love is in others: as also in like manner, superstition produces more good works in some, then true Religion in others: all which comes to passe, by the instinct of Sathan.

Och. That plurality of Wives, is a thing contrary to natural Reason, hereby appears, in that all Nations have alwayes abstained therefrom, as from a thing unlawful.

Tel. You know that the light of nature, that is to say, the Law which is imprinted in the hearts of men, is the gift of God, and that it is just, and that the Law of *Moses* is not contrary thereunto, but an explanation thereof For it

the Law of *Moſes* were contrary thereunto, God would be contrary to himſelf, ſeeing both proceed from God, or rather, both are one and the ſame Law. And therefore if plurality of Wives, had bin contrary to the judgement of right Reaſon: neither would *Moſes* verily have diſſembled the ſame; neither would thoſe moſt holy Patriarchs have uſed the ſame, nor would God have born with it. God by *Moſes* commanding the *Jewes*, that when they came into the borders of the Gentiles, they ſhould not imitate their vices, would have named *Polygamy*, among other vices, if it had bin unlawful; and he would have forbidden the ſame by *Moſes*, which nevertheleſs, he did not do. We no where read, that ever God puniſhed any man for having plurality of Wives, nor that he ever did by his Prophets, threaten ſuch as had many Wives. If you would have the manners of the Gentiles, to be your rule and law, you

ſhall

shall finde amongst them much wickedness. And whereas you said, that all Nations abhorred *Polygamy*, that is false, as appeares by the *Jewes*. Also *Chremes* had two Wives, if we will believe *Terence*: also *Boccus*, as *Salust* relates; in a word, *Socrates* himself, who notwithstanding, was the wisest of men, and had much of the light of nature.

Och. Even wise men sometimes do amiss.

Tel. Never any man condemned, or reprehended *Socrates*, for having two Wives, although for other things he hath been condemned. What needs many words? *Polygamy* was used as a good thing, and very profitable to Man-kind, by furthering propagation, not only among the *Jewes*, but also among the *Persians*, and the *Turks* likewise. Only in *Europe* it has been hateful; in which *Europe*, vice has abounded, if not more,

more, yet not a whit lesse, then in all other parts of the world. Nay, & in the days of old, *Polygamy* was commended, even in *Europe*. Only they would not have in one house many Mistresses to rule the Family, which was a thing convenient to avoid confusion.

Och. I will never confess, that it is a good thiug, to have many wives.

Tel. That is, because you conceive it is an unlawful conjunction, and you are over-powered with an old custome among the vulgar; which in tract of time, has wone the favour of the common people, and the Magistrates: by which it comes to passe, that the common opinion prevails more with you then the truth it self.

Och. But what do you say to the Imperial Laws, which are against you?

Tel.

Tel. In what place?

Och. First of all, the Emperors *Diocletianus* and *Maximinus*, do fordid Polygamy, in these words: *That no man within the Jurisdiction of the Roman Empire can have two wives: seeing also in the* Edict *of the* Prætor, *such men are branded with infamy: which thing a just Judge, will not suffer to go unpunished.* Also, in the same *Code*: *That man doubtless that has two wives at once, is accompanyed with infamy.*

Tel. The Authors of the first Law, as you say, were *Diocletianus* and *Maximinus*; the other is taken out of a certain Rescript of *Valerianus* and *Galienus*.

Och. It is sufficient, that being Emperors, they had power to make Laws.

It is to be observed, that in their daies, the condition of Matrimony,

trimony, in the Heathenish Empire was such, that any man might put away his wife for light and frivolous causes, and keep Concubines without any shame. Howbeit, they had neither the name, nor authority of wives. The Emperors therefore thus decreed, not because they thought Polygamy was unlawful, seeing they allowed many lawful Concubines; but they judged it fit, that only the first should have the title and authority of a wife, especially seeing they might Divorce her, if she pleased them not.

Och. But we see that Concubines were forbidden by the Emperor *Constantine.*

Tel. If you well weigh his words, you will find that his intent was, that it should be unlawful for him that had a wife to have Concubines; not that it was wholly unlawful, but he might not have them with him, that is, in

in his own House, where his wife dwelt, *viz*, to avoid brawlings, discords and contentions. But out of his house, he might have as many as he would, Moreover, the Roman Emperor *Valentianus*, having the same Authority and power, did not only permit such as had wives to keep Concubines, but many wives also at the same time, in the same house, all dignifyed by the same name and of equal authority: and *Valentianus* himself, at the same time had divers wives; and therefore by the Law of *Valentianus*, which was afterwards made, the former Law of *Constantine* was abrogated.

Och. But *Justinian* in his *Code*, makes no mention of that Law of *Valentianus*.

Tel. Yet that Law of his was, doubtless, published, as appears by the Histories. Add hereunto, that besides *Valentianus*, it is apparent, that *Constantius* also the Son

Son of *Constantine* the great, had many wives. *Clotarius* also King of *France*, and *Heribertus* and *Hyperic*us his Sons, had plurality of wives. I add *Pipin* and *Charles*, the Great, of whom *Urspergensis* witnesseth, that they had more wives then one; Yea, and *Lotarius*, and the son of *Lotarius*: as also *Arnolphus* the seventh Emperor of *Germany*, and *Frederick Barbaross*a, and *Philippus Deodatus* King of *France*, and many more. Nor will I deny, that it is a wicked thing to do as some do, who having wives, leave them, travel into strange Countries, and marry others. But I speak of such as take care of both their wives, and are thereunto called by God.

Och. You suppose that which never was in the world, *viz.* That any man should be called by God to have two wives.

Tel. Even as *Abraham*, *Jacob*, and many others were called by God

God thereunto, so may we. Nor do I see, why they had more need of this Remedy then we, nor why it was rather their duty to beget and bring up a numerous progenie, then ours.

Och. Constantine will not have men to keep plurality of wives, nor will the Emperor that now reigns.

Tel. Tell me what is just and fit, and not what men will. The Law of nature is unchangeable. And if in the daies of *Abraham*, it was agreeable to reason, to have plurality of wives, as a thing honest and just; otherwise, we may assure our selves *Abraham* would not have married above one; and therefore we must confesse, That it is at this day a thing fit and just, and so it was in the daies of *Constantine*, For though he were an Emperour, yet could he not make that to be unjust which was just in it self; Doubtless that ancient

ancient Church of Christ, had the knowledge of divine matters; and yet neither that Church, nor the Emperors of those times, did condemn or punish *Polygamy*. But men had rather seem to be good, then be so indeed, since they are so great haters of plurality of Wives, but not of Adultery. Finally, to condemn *Polygamy*, is for a man to prefer himself before God, who never condemned the same, and to strive to be more perfect then he. I spare to say, that I may not allow of the Lawes of the Emperors, in cases of Matrimony; seeing they refer the business to the Ecclesiastick Lawes.

Och. If you will be tryed by them, I am Victor.

Tel. Bring one *Canon* that makes for you.

Och. In the times of the Fathers, *Polygamy* was accounted so filthy, and so notoriously and manifestly abominable, that they did

not think fit to condemn it by words.

Tel. But I, for my part, am verily perſwaded, that thoſe Fathers of the ancient Church, were contented with the Canon of *Paul*, who would have the Miniſters of the Church, to be contented with one Wife; not becauſe, it was in it ſelf unlawful to have more, but that they might the better execute their Office: but he allowed others to live, according as they found themſelves inwardly moved by God.

Och. And yet plurality of wives was forbidden in the third and ſeventh *Neocæſarienſian* Councel.

Tel. I ſay, it was never forbidden, neither in them, nor in any other.

Och. Sure I am, they ordained a penalty for *Polygamiſts*, which they would never have done, unleſs

leſs they had counted it unlawful to have more Wives then one. Moreover, they forbad all Prieſts to be preſent at the mariage of him, that would have more wives then one.

Tel. True, but they did not forbid *Polygamy* it ſelf.

Och. They forbid it ſufficiently, when they ordained puniſhments for it.

Tel. Though you read all the Councels over, you ſhall never finde *Polygamy* forbidden. Nor can that be ſaid to be the reaſon, becauſe they conceived, it was forbidden in the holy Scriptures. For, neither is it forbidden, as we have ſhowne already: and in the 17. Canon of the Apoſtles, it is decreed, that a man having two Wives, ſhould be removed from the Epiſcopal and Prieſtly Function, and from all other Eccleſiaſticall Offices. But if the Authours

of those Canons, had seen that *Polygamy* was repugnant to the Scriptures, to charity, and the common good of mankind; they would have excommunicated such as had two Wives: nor would they only have kept them from the Communion; but they would have also punished them grievously. But those Apostolical persons, as *Paul* had done before them, did only forbid the Ministers of the Church to have more Wives then one, not as if it were a thing repugnant to common honesty; but because it would draw them away, and divert them from spiritual exercises. But because afterward, men began by little and little to turn aside from the right way, so that many now fell to account Marriage unlawful; they were not ashamed to write, That a mans first Wife being dead, it was Adultery and not Marriage, to take another: touching which matter, you may see what *Gratian* writes. So also *Hie-*

rome,

rome and *Tertullian* interpret that saying of *Paul* and the Apostles, as if his intent had been, that he which had two Wives, though one after another, might not be a Minister in the Church of God: as also he that married a Widow, or a divorced Wife, which is observed at this day, by those most holy men (Sir Reverence) the Papists, who notwithstanding, create men of extraordinary and noted filthiness for their Bishops. But mark what I shall say: the life of a Courtier and a Souldier, is not sinful in it self, but many may be called by God to embrace the same; and yet in the twelfth Canon of the *Nicene* Councel it was decreed, that those men should be severely punished, who having left the Warres, should become Souldiers again; notwithstanding in those times, Warre was seldom made, saving against Idolaters & Infidels. In like manner, though they decreed penalties for such as had 2. Wives; yet is not *Bigamy* there-

fore sinful, nor does it follow, but that many may by divine instinct, be called thereunto. There are many such Canons; especially, concerning Matrimony, which want amendment; nor are we tyed by any Canons, but such as have their foundation in the word of God. The Fathers have many times erred, as being men, and sometimes swarving from the rule of Gods word. Moreover, we ought to believe, that *Paul* taught the *Ephesians* (for examples sake) and the rest of the Churches, all things necessary to salvation, as himself testifies; and yet he taught them not, that any were to be tyed to one Wife, excepting Ministers of the Church.

Och. He might therefore peradventure do that, to the intent, that others by their example, might by little and little, be brought to practise the same.

Tel.

Tel. In the first place, that which you say, is not founded upon any word of God; without which, it seems to me an impious thing to bind mens Consciences. Moreover, every thing that is convenient for Bishops, ought not to be propounded, as an example for all to follow.

Och. Yet is it much, to say that the Church has erred, for the space now of a thousand two hundred years, in punishing *Bigamy*.

Tel. That error is not to be attributed to the Church of God, but to men, who in the Church, have as much erred in forbidding Priests to marry; yea, and I would have you to take notice, that the *Neocæsariensian* Councel decreed not, that the second Wife should be divorced, nor that the second was no true Marriage.

Och. The Councel declared that sufficiently, by decreeing penalties for such as had two Wives.

Tel. Austin judges that man to sin, who, having made a vow of chastity, marries a wife; and yet he accounts it true marriage, and that it ought not to be made void. This Argument therefore, is of no force; the Councel enacted penalties for such as had two wives; and therefore the second was no true Marriage. Moreover, though above a thousand years are passed, since penalties were enacted against such as had two wives: yet is it not above four hundred years, since that decree was first received by the *Italians*, *Spaniards*, and *Germans*. For it is but an humane constitution; and the Bishops would have exclaimed against *Valentianus*, for his plurality of wives; but that he had the holy Scriptures on his side. And notwithstanding, they reprehended such as had more then one

one wife, as *Auſtin* and *Boniface* did, as perſons that ſeemed over indulgent to the fleſh; they did not therefore excommunicate them, or reckon them for ſuch as could not be ſaved. *Ambroſe* was a very ſharp Reprover of ſin; yet do we not any where read, that he reproved *Valentinianus*, for having two wives. Yea, and the ſaid *Ambroſe*, reprehending *Juſtina* his ſecond wife; for being an *Arrian*, muſt have reproved her alſo for being no true wife, but a Concubine, which notwithſtanding he did not do. It is likewiſe recorded that *Leo* the fifth, when he heard that a certain Biſhop in *Africa* had two wives, he only decreed, that by reaſon of the words of *Paul*, he ſhould be degraded from that honour; but not that he ſhould put away his ſecond wife, or be otherwiſe puniſhed for having two. *Gregory* likewiſe, Biſhop of *Rome*, writing to *Boniface*, who was ſent into *Germany*, to preach Chriſtianity, an hundred

and twenty years after the Nativity of Christ, beseeches him to take care, that such as had many wives, and all were dead save one, might content themselves with her alone, and marry no more. So that he exhorts men to shun plurality of Wives, just as he should exhort them to embrace a single life; which can be understood of none, but such as are called by God, to such a kind of life. The true Ecclesiastical Canons, which oblige us to their observance, are such as have their foundation in Gods word. But go to; read that Epistle which *Gregory* the third of that name, Bishop of *Rome*, wrote to the foresaid *Bonifacius*, there you shall find him write, to this effect.

If any Man have a Wife, which by reason of some bodily infirmity, cannot afford her Husband due benevolence, he shall do well to abstain from her. But if he cannot contain (for that is a gift of God

God not given to all) it is better, that he should marry another wife, then burn; provided, he allow his first wife all necessary maintenance. Than which, what could be expressed more clearly?

Och. All that you can say, though you talk till Doomsday, will never make me think it fit, and lawful for a Man to have more then one Wife.

Tel. Suppose there are more Women then Men, what shall the poor Women do in this case?

Och. They must do, just as the men should do, in case there were many more Men then Women, *viz.* pray to God to give them the gift of continence.

Tel. In case a man is by God called to a married condition, and hath not the gift of continence, to live

live a single life, it would be in vain for him to pray to God, that he might have the gift to live without a Wife: for in my Opinion, he would never obtain his request, seeing God calls him to marry.

Och. The whole World has believed, that plurality of Wives is unlawful, nor can any man have more then one Wife, without giving the greatest offence imaginable, which all men ought to shun. Moreover, it is the will of God, that we obey our Magistrates; and they are so far from consenting to *Polygamy*, that they will put him to death, that shall have more then one wife.

Tel. But not, if he have many Concubines, or Whores. If any man being moved by divine instinct, to marry divers Wives, and it should be no sin so to do; if he married them, it were a scandal taken (as the Schools speak) and

not

not given. Also he might, to avoid scandal, marry his second Wife privately.

Och. But such things are hardly practicable; and if he should be often seen in Company of his second Wife, men would take offence, as supposing her to be his Concubine. I shall therefore continually exhort all men to avoid *Polygamy*; and truly I exhort you to do the same. The Papists themselves do vow to live single, and shall we that are regenerate, spiritual, and Evangelical men, marry more wives then one?

Tel. Just; And how honest, that single life of theirs is, all the World takes notice. The Law it self condemns barren Matrimony; so far is it from not condemning voluntary and barren single life. Now I speak expresly, of such as have not the gift of continency, nor are called to a single life. The *Romans* did punish such as lived

lived ſingle, and rewarded thoſe, who by abundance of Children, did augment the Common-wealth; and *Lycurgus* alſo, and *Ulpianus* decreed the ſame. Now what more bleſſed a thing can there be, then the preſervation of humane kinde? which would wholly periſh, were it not for Marriage. A man cannot tranſmit to poſterity, a more honourable memorial of his name, then by leaving behind him Children, virtuouſly educated. And what greater folly can be imagined, then under a ſhew of holineſs, to ſhun holy Matrimony, as a thing profane, which notwithſtanding, has bin ordained by God, is dictated by nature, perſwaded by reaſon, confirmed by Chriſt, praiſed by Authours, ſacred and profane, commended by the Lawes, approved by the conſent of all Nations; and whereunto we are invited by the Examples of good, and holy men? What more barbarous and inhumane, then to loath Ma-

tri-

trimony, the desire whereof is implanted in us by nature? What more unthankful to the common nature of the World and Mankind, then not to beget Children, as our Ancestors and Parents have begotten us? For my part I make account, that such men are murtherers of as many as they might have begotten, in case they had embraced Matrimony; unless peradventure, they are carried by a Divine Impulse to live single.

Questionless, it is a kind of Man-slaughter, not only by Medicaments, to cause abortion and barrenness; but also, without very just cause, to shun Marriage.

Och. I do not condemn Matrimony, namely, the having of one Wife; but the having of two, or more.

Tel. But what advice will you give me?

Och. That you marry no more Wives, but pray to God for the gift of continence.

Tel. What if he will not give it me?

Och. He will, if you pray in Faith.

Tel. What if he neither give me the gift, nor faith to ask it?

Och. If you shall then do that, to which God shall encline you, so that you be sure you are led by divine Instigation, you shall not sin. For it can be no Errour, to obey God. Other advice I cannot give you. And therefore I bid you farwel, and promise you, that I will seek God in your behalf.

Tel.

Tel. And that is it which I beseech you to do, that I may not offend God; but that I may give him all honour and glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

A DIALOGUE OF Divorce,

Between *OCHINUS* and *MESCHINUS*.

Ochinus.

I See my moſt dear friend *Meſchinus* coming towards me; and he ſeems to me by his carriage to be exceeding ſad. I have a great mind to go meet him, and ſee whether or no I am miſtaken in my conjecture. I wiſh you an happy day, Sir.

Meſch. Hitherto, truly, I have found it very unhappy.

Och.

Och. Why so?

Mesch. I am brim-full of grief, nor was I ever in my life so possessed with trouble and sadnesse, as now I am. And this evil is added to all the rest, that I cannot lay open my grief; for if I could open my heart unto you, and discover that which perplexes me, I should seem in some measure to be disburthened and refreshed. But my calamity is so foul, that it is not fit to be related to any man, but ought rather to be buried in silence.

Och. Are you ignorant that you and I are all one? and that all affairs, both prosperous and adverse, ought to be common among friends? And therefore if you communicate your secrets to me, you do not acquaint another therewith, but your own self.

Mesch.

Mesch. But there is no remedy in the world for my calamity.

Och. Perhaps there is. Do but open your mind to me: for you shall finde me your secret and faithful friend.

Mesch. I took my wife in the act of Adultery with another man, which torments me the more, because I alwaies loved her, and should have believed any thing, rather then that she would have dealt so by me.

Och. Oh strange! Truly I am exceedingly sorrowful, but there is a Remedy.

Mesch. What is that?

Och. Divorce.

Mesch. If I might do it religiously.

Och. Why so?

Mesch.

Mesch. Because sacred Matrimony cannot be dissolved.

Och. True, if there be no adultery committed.

Mesch. Dare you then say, that Marriage, a thing so holy and divine, may be dissolved by Adultery? so that men being thereby freed, may marry other women?

Och. I for my part have said it, & will say it again, and stand to it: & that you may perceive the truth of what I say, I will shew you the reason of it. A woman in the matrimoniall contract, gives up the honest use of her Body to her husband, promising that no man while he lives shall have the use thereof besides himself: and the man does the like by his wife. For this cause *Paul* saies, that *the wife has not power over her own body, but the husband*: and likewise, that *the husband has not power over his own body, but the wife.* If therefore

therefore the wife break her promise, and faith made to her husband, as yours has done, having given the use of her Body to another, contrary to her Covenant made with you; in this case the husband is free and disingaged, so that he may grant the honest use of his Body to another woman, joyned to him in Marriage.

Mesch. When men in covenanting, do give or promise any thing upon condition, there is no question, but the condition being unperformed, the promise or donation becomes invalid: But if the Promise or Donation be made without any condition, it is alwaies valid, though one of the parties break their faith. And because in Matrimony, an honest use of the Body is promised, both by the wife and husband, without any manner of condition, it follows, That though the one falsifies his or her faith, yet is not the other party freed from the Engagement.

Och.

Och. Do you then think, that the husband promises the use of his Body to his wife perpetually, without any condition, *viz.* Though she shall behave her self perfidiously towards her husband?

Mesch. Yes.

Och. But in the matrimoniall contract, doubtlesse, neither saies to the other: I do for ever give you the use of my Body, notwithstanding that you prove unfaithful to me.

Mesch. Nor is it thus said, I give you the use of my Body, for ever, upon this condition, That you prove faithful to me. But this, doubtless, ought to be the mind of each of them, *viz.* to give the other the use of his or her Body for ever, whether he or she shall prove faithful, or no?

Och. And how know you that,

I pray you? If it were necessary that Marriage should be contracted in such a sense, it ought to be so expressed in the Contract, which notwithstanding is not done. And if it were so, that these words should be used: I give thee the use of my Body for ever, though thou shouldest prove unfaithful to me, th r would be very few, that could be content so to be bound.

Mesch. Therefore it is, that no such expression is used, lest one should give the other occasion of breach of faith, and to think: Although I shall break my troth plighted, yet cannot he or she deny me the use of his or her Body, seeing it has been given me without any condition. But they ought doubtlesse, both of them to be of that mind.

Och. But I believe there are few, that contract Matrimony in such a sense, as that they will never deny the use of their Body to

the party with whom they contract, though that party should prove unfaithful. But, go to; think you not, that it is lawful for you, after you have taken her in Adultery, to separate your self from her for a time, and not to meddle with her, but to deny her the use of your Body; yet so as to remain bound, as before, in the bonds of Matrimony, not being in a capacity to marry another woman?

Mesch. That, I conceive, I may lawfully do; provided that the Matrimony be not dissolved.

Och. Yet, according to your own words, you married her upon such tearms, and with such a mind, as that you gave her the use of your Body without any condition, so that you could not deny the same, though she should prove unfaithful unto you.

Mesch.

Mesch. In the matrimoniall Contract, I gave my wife the use of my Body, both without condition, and upon condition, as she also did to me Without condition, in as much as I promised, that I would never, she living, engage the use of my Body, nor once grant the same, to another; although my wife should carry her self unfaithfully towards me. Again, I gave the same upon condition, in as much as I gave it with this Proviso, that she should be faithful to me: otherwise, that it should be in my power to deprive her thereof for a time; and the self same, my wife promised to me. And this ought to be enough to preserve such as marry from Adultery, besides other causes both Divine and humane, wherewith they ought to be moved, to abstain from so great a wickedness.

Och. But this imagination of yours is built and founded in the

Aire, and contrary both to the holy Scriptures and right Reason. And that it is, in the first place, contrary to the word of God, is clearly seen from the words of Matth. 5. Christ, who thus speakes, *You have heard how it is said, He that will put away his wife, let him give her a Bill of Divorce. But I say unto you, he that shall put away his wife (save in the case of Adultery) causes her to commit Adultery: and he that marries her that is put away, commits Adultery.* From these words of Christ, it follows, that if the wife be an adultress, the marriage is dissolved; and the Man may without sinne marry another woman, which he could not do, if he should put her away for other causes besides Adultery.

Mesch. But there is no mention of this matter, in the Gospel of *John*.

Och.

Och. And what then I pray you? Will you therefore deny that those words were spoken by Christ, and accuse the other Evangelists for liars? Christ wrought many miracles, which are not written in the Gospel of *John*; and did not Christ therefore work the said miracles, because *John* has made no mention of them? *John* in his Gospel, did not write all the miracles and workes that Christ did, nor all the words which he said; yet ought we not a whit the lesse to believe, that he did those miracles and workes, and spake those words, of which the other Evangelists have made mention, than if they were likewise written in the Gospel of *John*.

Misch. But what will you answer to this, that it is by *Mark* and *Luke* reported, that Christ should say, *If any man shall put away his wife and marry another, he is an Adulterer*, without adding

any exception of Adultery, or any other thing.

Och. And what of all that? Will you therefore say, that *Matthew* added that exception touching the wives adultery, from his own head.

Mesch. Nay rather, Will you say, that those other two Evangelists, have so delivered in writing the sentence of Christ, in a matter of such moment, as to leave his speech maimed, and detract from his words?

Och. Matthew relates, that Christ said touching *John Baptist, that among all born of women, none was greater then he*: And *Luke, that no Prophet had been greater then he.* Now if Christ had uttered those words twice, it might be alledged, That at one time he said *a greater*, and at another time *a greater Prophet.* But like it is, that he spake those words

word but once. And therefore we must think, that either *Luke* added that word *Prophet* of his own head: or, that *Matthew* omitted the same. And because it is more credible, that *Matthew* omitted somewhat, then that *Luke* should add any thing, we are to believe that Christ said, there had been no *greater Prophet*. Likewise, in this case we ought rather to think, that those two Evangelists omitted that exception touching Adultery, then that *Matthew* did add the same. So that we must confesse, that it was uttered by Christ. But, let us suppose that Christ said it not, and that *Matthew* added it; in such a case, we must certainly confesse, either that *Matthew* wrote by the Instinct of Christ, as his Instrument and Member; and that it is therefore of as much authority, as if Christ himself had said it: or that *Matthew* added it of his own head; and so all the authority of the Evangelists falls to the

ground which were a great wickedneſſe to ſay. And therefore, we muſt confeſs, that thoſe words are true, as they are recorded by *Matthew*.

Meſch. That we may rightly underſtand the holy Scriptures, the circumſtances are diligently to be conſidered. *Matthew* wrote his Goſpel to the Jewes, who becauſe they were accuſtomed to Divorce their wives at pleaſure; he gave allowance to them, as men unperfect, to put away their wives for Adultery. But *Mark* and *Luke*, becauſe they wrote to the Greeks and Gentiles, who were not wont upon ſuch ſlight terms, to put away their wives as the Jewes were, they did not permit them to put them away. And becauſe we are ſprung from the Gentiles, it is unlawful for us to put them away.

Och.

Och. In the first place, How you come to know that *Matthew* wrote his Gospel in *Hebrew*, I know not. But suppose it be so, as some give out, it does not therefore follow, that he wrote only to the Jewes. If *Matthew* when he wrote his Gospel, had wrote an Epistle to the Jewes, and that touching matters concerning them alone, there were somewhat in that you say. But he in his Gospel relates the Nativity, Life, Death, and Resurrection of Christ, what he said, and did, and suffered, for the profit and good, not of the Jewes only, but of all Mankinde. And therefore, as Christ forbad it to all men, though principally to the Jewes: even so also *Matthew* wrote his Gospel to all. Otherwise, we must confesse, that the other Evangelists also, wrote only to the Gentiles, and not to the Jewes likewise. Yea verily, and the Epistle which *Paul* wrote unto the *Romans*, seeing it was not written concerning

matters belonging to them alone, both was and will be useful to the whole world: Even so, the Doctrine of each of the Evangelists, is profitable for all men. Add hereunto, that if what you have said be true, it should be lawful for Jewes being turned Christians to put away their wives for Adultery; but not for the Gentiles: and so Christ should not have taken away the partition wall through his flesh, not abolished the enmity, even the Law of Commandments contained in Ordinances, for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one Body. Also, that should be false which *Paul* writes, where he saies, that *in Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Gentile.*

Eph. 2.

Gal. 3.

Mesch. Are you ignorant, that Christ wills and commands, that *whom God has joyned together*, in Marriage, *no man should separate*? And

And will you say, That it is lawfull for me to put away my wife?

Och. Is not the Pope a man?

Mesch. Without all question

Och. How comes it then to passe, that he separates whom God has joyned together in Marriage?

Mesch. After what manner?

Och. Suppose an honest and creditable Virgin, have with her Parents consent married a young man suitable to her condition; If after the marriage has bin solemnized with all the rites & Ceremonies thereto belonging, a toy shall take that young man in the Head, to become a Fryar; after that he is received into the religious fraternity, nd has made profession thereof, the Pope will dissolve the said Marriage, so that it shall be lawfu-

lawful for the said Virgin to marry another man, provided there have been no carnal conjunction between them.

Mesch. But in this case which you suppose, it is not the Pope, but Christ that frustrates the Marriage.

Och. How I pray you?

Mesch. Know ye not that Christ being at the wedding, did make void the Marriage of the Evangelist *John*, who was the Bridegroome? because he took up a resolution to follow Christ. So also, the same Christ undoes the matrimony of such as have resolved to follow him, and to become Monks and Fryars.

Och. I for my part never knew, that *John* the Evangelist was the Bridegroome at that marriage where Christ was a guest: nor can I devise how you came to the know-

knowledge of such a secret. Nay verily, I cannot tell how you should know so much, as that the foretaid Marriage was dissolved, and that by Christ. I have thought that Christ was present at that marriage, not to dissolve, but approve of holy Matrimony. Nor do I believe, that to follow Christ, it is necessary to become a Monk or Friar: rather, I know for certain, a man may be both an Husband and an Apostle, as *Peter* was, and that Marriage is not repugnant to perfect Faith, Hope, and Charity.

Mesch. Marriage is such a band as couples and binds men and women together so long as they live: and therefore the one party being dead, the band is looſed, so that the party surviving, is free and unrestrained from marrying again with any other, as *Paul* writes. If therefore natural death dissolve Matrimony, we are doubtless to think, that it is much more dissolved *Rom. 7.*

ved by ſpiritual death. And becauſe he that becomes a *Monk* or *Fryer*, is ſpiritually dead unto the World, we muſt needs conſeſs, that the marriage of ſuch an one is diſſolved, and that the woman is free; neither is the marriage diſſolved by man, but by death.

Och. They likewiſe that are baptized, are dead to the World, yea, and buried with Chriſt, and yet their Marriage is not diſſolved: becauſe two perſons may be married together, the one of which is dead to the World, and alive to God, and yet their Marriage held good and firm: yea, and ſuppoſing both the parties be dead unto the World, yet is not their Marriage fruſtrate. If Matrimony were a thing naught and vitious, I ſhould then conſeſs, it could not be practiſed by good Chriſtians, who are dead unto the World. But Marriage is a thing ſo holy, that it is not repugnant to Chriſtian perfection, and the ſame man may

be

be both in the highest degree spiritual, and a married man nevertheless. Nor do I truly believe, that men are made dead to the World, and alive to Christ, by Monkery, more then by Christianity. But to return to the point in hand, where as you have alledged that saying of Christ, which forbids men to seperate whom God has joyned together, *viz.* by Marriage. I answer, If the Woman be an Adulteress, and therefore put away by her Husband, in such a case, the Marriage is not dissolved by man, but by God; whose pleasure it is, that for Adultery, it should be dissolved. And therefore, as in every lawful Marriage, God is he that joynes us together; so, whereever Marriage is lawfully dissolved, God is he that dissolves the same.

And again, When Marriages are unlawful, the Devil is the maker, and joyner of them; and he it is that dissolves them, when they are dissolved without just cause

cause. Add hereunto, that seeing by marriage, of two one flesh is made; if either of them commits Adultery, that party breaking his or her plighted faith, by joyning him or her self unto another, and disjoyning him or her self, from his or her respective Wife or Husband, dissolves the Marriage. And therefore, if the Wife have committed Adultery, and for that cause her Husband marries another: in such case the marriage is not dissolved by the man, though he marry another; but by the woman, who by her Adultery, has disannulled the marriage. Therefore Christ, when he forbids Man to seperate, whom God has joyned together: he does not only declare, that a man ought not without just cause, to put away his wife; but also, that neither of the parties should commit Adultery, because he or she that commits adultery does for his, or her part, dissolve the marriage.

Mes.

Mes. But you do not understand the mind of Christ, when he denies that a man ought to put away his wife, save for adultery. For his intent is not, that a man by his wives adultery, becomes so free, that he may marry another woman: his meaning being only this, that a man in regard of his wives adultery, may be so seperated from her, as to deny her conjugal benevolence; the holy band of matrimony, remaining nevertheless entire betwixt them.

Och. When the Jewes divorced their wives, the matrimony was dissolved, so that not only they which divorced them, might marry other women; but the divorced wives might likewise be married to other Husbands. Otherwise it had bin needless for God by *Moses*, to forbid Priests to marry women that had bin divorced, in case such women had not bin allowed to marry; and yet God by *Moses*, forbad the Priests *Lev.* 21.

to

to marry women that had bin divorced from their Husbands. Christ therefore speaks after this manner. It has bin said, *viz.* by *Moses*, whosoever will put away his wife, let him give her a Bill of Divorce: namely, to the intent, the Husband may not marry her again; and that she may be free, and in a capacity to marry to another man; and that marriage of hers may become firm and stable. But I, sayes Christ, speaking after another manner, do tell you, whosoever does put away his wife (that is to say, as the Jewes were wont to put away theirs, who having given them a Bill of divorce, were freed and inabled to marry others) he is an adulterer. Therefore, it is lawful for a man to put away his wife, and marry another, only in case his wife be an Adulteress. *Marriage* may therefore, according to the Doctrine of Christ, be dissolved for Adultery, in such manner as the Jews were wont, for every cause to dissolve

Mat. 5. 19.

Deut. 24.

their

their *Marriages*, not only so, as that they should not have to do one with another, in a conjugal way; but also that each party should be so free, as they might marry with any other. Neither indeed, is it a true divorce, unless the *Matrimony* be dissolved: neither were the Jews acquainted with any other kind of divorcing, or putting away of wives, saving that which did abrogate and nullifie the marriage, and of such a putting away, or divorcing it was which Christ spake, which is apparent from these words by him subjoyned: If the Husband (save in the case of his wives committing Adultery) does put her away, and marry another, he commits adultery. Therefore if he put away his wife for adultery, and marry another, he does not, in so doing, commit adultery. We must therefore from the words of Christ, be forced to confess, that the marriage is made void, by the wives adultery; seeing it is in this case *Mat.* 19.

caſe lawful for a man to marry another. And that you may clearly ſee, that Chriſt there ſpeaks, only of ſuch a divorce, as diſannuls the marriage, do but conſider, how the Phariſes tempting him, and asking him, if for every cauſe a man may put away, or divorce his wife, *viz.* in ſuch wife as the Jews did, by diſſolving the matrimonial Contract; he anſwers them, that it is not lawful, ſave for adultery. *Marriage* is therefore diſſolved by adultery, otherwiſe the anſwer of Chriſt were impertinent. Nor ſhall I ſtand to ſay, that if Chriſt by the terme of divorcing or putting away, had intended only an abſtinence from conjugal embracements, ſo as that the marriage was nevertheleſs to continue firm, that Exception had contained in it matter of untruths: for it is all one, as if he had ſaid, a man may divorce his wife onely for adultery. Now, that it ſhould be unlawful for a man, ſo to put away his wife, as to

ab-

ſtain from her bed, ſave in caſe of adultery, is falſe: for it is clear, a man may lawfully do that for many cauſes.

Muſ. Let us ſuppoſe, and take for granted, that Chriſt by the termes of putting away and divorce, did intend the abrogation and diſſolution of marriage, yet ſhall you never be able to make it appear, that a man by reaſon of his wives adultery, may marry another: the cauſe whereof is this. The ſpeech of Chriſt has two members, each of which is true, and the firſt member is this: whoſoever puts away his wife ſave for adultery he makes her commit adultery, that is, gives her occaſion of ſo doing, becauſe he puts her away, not being an Adulteris. For if he ſhould put her away, being an Adulteress, he ſhould not give her occaſion of adulterating, becauſe ſhe was adulterated before. The other member is likewiſe true, being rightly underſtood, that

that is to say, without any exception, *v.z.* after this manner: whosoever marries her that is put away (*v.z.* unjustly) commits Adultery. You see how the truth of Christ his Speech stands firm; nor can we conclude from his words thus understood, That Marriage is abrogated and nullified by Adultery.

Och. According to your opinion therefore, Christ intimates, That if any man puts away his wife, not being an Adultresse, he gives her occasion to commit Adultery, unlesse she were adulterated before. For, in such a case, seeing she is already adulterated, she cannot be made an Adultresse. Now if this be the mind of Christ, What great matter has he taught us? For who knows not, That he which puts away his wife, being already an Adultresse, does not give her occasion to commit her first Adultery, because the same has bin already by her committed

ted? It seems you have so low an opinion of Christ, as to believe that he should utter so frivolous a speech. Though an Husband, divorcing his adulterous wife, does not give her occasion to commit her first Adultery; yet, questionlesse, if it be unlawful for him to put her away for Adultery and if the marriage be not thereby dissolved, he that puts her away, gives her occasion to commit new adulteries; from which to terrifie us, Christ would doubtless have said, That she ought not to be put away for any cause, no, not though she should have committed Adultery: for as much as, even thereby, the Marriage could not be dissolved. It is therefore clear, that, as to the first member of the speech, this is the mind of Christ; If an husband put away his wife, only because she is an Adultresse, he gives her no occasion to commit Adultery, because that she marrying upon these tearms, the former marriage being

ing dissolved, does not commit Adultery, but becomes the lawful wife of her latter husband; the marriage which she had made with her former husband, being by her adultery dissolved. Certain likewise it is, that those words of exception used by Christ, are likewise to be accommodated to the second member of the speech, so that the sense of Christ in that member may be this; that if any man marry her that is put away, he commits Adultery, unless she were put away for Adultery. And that this is the intent of Christ, is apparent, not only from the tenor of his words, but also much more from what he saies in another place, explaining the said words. *Whosoever*, quoth he, *puts away his wife, save for Adultery, and marries another, commits Adultery.* And so does he that marries her that is put away. Here it is manifestly apparent, that the exception is to be accommodated to each

Matt. 19

each member of the speech, and that the meaning thereof is this, That he sins not, who having divorced his wife for Adultery marries another: and that he likewise does not sin, who marries her that has been divorced, or put away for Adultery.

Mesch. Will you make Christ to contradict *Paul*, who thus speaks; Unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband; but if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband; And then without any manner of exception, he adds this following speech, And let not the husband put away his wife. And therefore it is unlawful for a man to Divorce his wife for Adultery. 1 *Cor.* 7.

Och. Do you believe, that it is *Pauls* meaning, that it is not lawful for a man upon any occasion

whatsoever, to put away his wife and marry another, no not for Adultery?

Mesch. I believe it.

Och. But I have shewn already, That the sentence and judgment of Christ is, That a man may lawfully put away his wife for Adultery and marry another. How can it therefore be, that *Paul* should faithfully declare the Commands of Christ, as he saies of himself that he did, if his mind was, to speak contrary to what had been said by Christ, *viz.* That a man ought not to Divorce his wife, no not for Adultery? For, if this be his sense, certainly *Paul* was no faithful Messenger of Christ. And therefore, if we will grant, That *Paul* faithfully delivered the mind of Christ, we must confesse, that by him Adultery was excepted as well as by Christ, although *Paul* did not in words expresse

expresse so much. For this cause, *Ambrose* conceived, that in the words of *Paul* the exception of adultery must be understood, lest *Paul* should be contrary to Christ. Add hereunto, That seeing *Paul* in this place, exhorts to reconciliation; it is clear, that he speaks not of Adultery, but of other smaller injuries, for which the *Greeks* were wont to make Divorce, and which might easily be reconciled; for which kind of injuries, *Paul* would not by any means have married people to Divorce. It may likewise be said, That although the mind of Christ, is, That he who puts away his wife that has committed adultery, and marries another, is not an Adulterer, because in such a case, the second Matrimony is good and valid, as the first was; yet he did not think it was alwaies rightly done, and that Husbands of Adulterous wives, ought alwaies to Divorce them and mar-

ry others. But rather that it may sometimes so happen, that the wife being an Adultereſs, her husband may nevertheleſſe ſin, if he put her away and take another. For in caſe a Wife have committed adultery, and the Husband be ſo minded, as to judge that it makes more for the Glory of God, not to put her away and to take another, than the contrary; ſuppoſing it probable, That if he take the Adultereſs again, ſhe will be reclaimed: but if he put her quite away, ſhe will grow worſe: he ought not to Divorce her; and if he marry another, he ſins: not becauſe the ſecond is no true marriage, but becauſe in refuſing and divoreing her, and marrying another, he hath ſinned againſt Charity and his own Conſcience. And becauſe 'tis likely, that many times 'tis the beſt way, not to Divorce them, *Paul* gave order in the name of Chriſt, That they ſhould not be divorced, although

though they did commit adultery, in case the husbands believe, that it will make more for the Glory of God not to Divorce them. But if the husband judge, That in case he be reconciled to her, both she and other wives, by her example, will become more insolent and depraved, to the great dishonour of God; he ought to put her away by Divorce.

Mesch. Paul in another place saies, That the wife is bound to her husband by the Law so long as he lives, so that if she marry another man, she becomes an Adultereſſe: which holds not, he being dead; for then, being freed by the death of her husband, she is by the Law allowed to marry another. And therefore a Wife cannot so long as her Husband lives, any waies be freed from the band of Matrimony, and marry another.

Och. They which hold it lawful for a man, because of his wives adultery, to marry another, do not therefore think it lawful for a woman by reason of her husbands adultery, to marry another man. I may therefore grant you that which *Paul* writes, *viz.* That it is in no wise lawful for the wife during her husbands life, to marry another, though her husband be an Adulterer. But it does not therefore follow, that the husband cannot Divorce his adulterous wife, and marry another. And therefore, though the husband has power to put away his wife, having played the Adulteress, yet has not the woman the same power, to Divorce her husband, in case he prove an Adulterer, and marry another man.

Mesch. But what arguments do those men bring, to maintain this their opinion?

Och.

Och. The very words of Christ, who saies expressly, That it is lawful for a man to put away his wife for adultery: but that it should be lawful for a woman to put away or refuse her husband for adultery, he has not said. Neither did ever *Mose* speak so much as one word of the divorcing of men. They add also this Argument, because the husband is Head of his wife, and has authority over her, he may upon the occasion aforesaid, put her away: which the wife cannot do to the husband, as having no such authority.

Misch. If Marriage be dissolved by adultery, so that of two, there is no longer one flesh made, as there was by Matrimony; seeing the husbands adultery is as much adultery, as the wives, I admire that Marriage is abrogated and dissolved by the womans adultery, and not by the mans likewise.

Och. Marriage is not ſo diſſolved by adultery, that as ſoon as the adultery is committed, the band of Matrimony is looſed and broken a ſunder; ſo that, neither the woman is any longer his true wife, nor the man her true husband. For, ſuppoſing the caſe to be ſo, it were neceſſary that they ſhould be married again, to the end they might enjoy one another in a conjugal way, without ſin. And therefore the Marriage is not diſſolved by the Act of Adultery; but by the womans Adultery it comes to paſſe, that the Man has power to Divorce her, and ſhe being divorced, the Matrimony is diſſolved, which does not ſo come to paſſe by the mans Adultery: for as much as the wife does not thereby acquire any power to put away her husband, or Divorce her ſelf from him.

Meſch.

Mesch. Nay, but a wife may also put away her husband if he be an Adulterer; although neither *Christ* nor *Moses* have expressed so much, nor the Jewes ever practised the same.

Och. I will give you another answer to the words of *Paul*, and say, That it is not necessary that Similitudes & Comparisons should in all points agree; but it is enough if they agree in that particular for which they are brought, As when Christ saies to his Apostles, *I am the Vine, ye are the Branches*, his meaning is by that similitude to declare, That as the Vine-branches cannot bear fruit without the Vine, neither can they without Christ; and if in that point the similitude hold it is enough. But he does not likewise intimate this, That as the branches of the Vine bear fruit only once a year: so they should bring forth the fruits of righteousnesse only once

a year. So *Paul* in the place before alledged would declare to the Jewes converted to Christ, That they were not now under the Law, seeing by Christ the carnal man was killed in them, who stood in need of the Law; and brings the Example of a woman, who may lawfully marry againe, her husband being dead. It is therefore sufficient, if in this particular the comparison hold (as it doth) That as by the death of her husband, a wife is freed from the Law of Marriage, so that she may be married to another man; even so we, by the death of the carnal man are made free from the Law of *Moses*; seeing that we now operate, not by command of the Law, but by impulse of the Spirit, and are no longer under the Law, but under Grace. Yet is it not unlawful therefore for a wife to marry again, her former husband being yet alive, in case she be by him divorced.

Mesch.

Mesh. And yet *Paul* saies, While he lives she cannot marry another, without being thereby an Adulteress. *Rom.* 7.

Och. I answer, In that place, the saying of *Paul* runs thus; I speak to such as know the Law, *viz.* the Jewes that are already baptized, who know the Law allows a man to put away his wife, by giving her a Bill of Divorce: by which means she being freed may marry another man. This therefore was the mind of *Paul*, that she might not marry another during her husbands life, unless she be first divorced from him; and therefore during her husbands life, it is not in her power to marry, though she be an adulteresse, because the power of divorcing is not in her, but in her husband. And I am of the same opinion, touching what the same *Paul* writes in another place. The wife (quoth he) is bound by the Law *1 Cor.* 7.

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as long as her husband liveth, that is to say, she cannot marry to another, unlesse her husband put her away for Adultery. But if her husband dye, she is freed from that Law.

Mesoh. As God allowed the Jews by reason of their imperfection, and to give a little way to the hardness of their hearts, to Divorce their wives when they pleased: so we must needs confesse, that he has denied this liberty to Christians, because they are perfect.

Och. This indeed is manifest; Unlesse sin had been in the world, there would never have been any Divorce: and unto Christians, who ought to be perfect, Divorce may be in such a sense said to be forbidden, in as much as Adultery is forbidden. But if a woman be an Adulteress, her husband is allowed to put her away, and

and to marry another. Even as, if there had never been any ſin, Parents would never have caſt off, or renounced and diſinherited their children; and Chriſtians, as thoſe that ſhould be perfect, are ſo far forbidden to renounce their children, for as much as thoſe cauſes are forbidden, for which they may juſtly renounce them: But if children be ſuch, that their Pa-Parents may juſtly renounce them, it is allowed to Parents, both to renounce them, and to adopt others in their ſtead.

Meſch. As the Jewes offended, in divorcing their wives: ſo do alſo the Chriſtians, and indeed much more.

Och. If at any time the Jewes did Divorce them upon a juſt ground, they ſinned not; no more do the Chriſtians.

Meſch.

Mesch. There can be no just cause of Divorce, by reason of those mighty inconveniences which follow the same.

Och. Christ, it seems, was not aware of those so great inconveniences, which Divorce, as you say, brings along with it: or you are more careful to preserve sanctity then Christ was. If Divorce drew so many inconveniences after it as you say, we ought to confesse, that Christ did ill who allowed a man to practise it, by reason of his wives adultery.

Mesch. If Christ did permit it, he permitted it only as an evil thing.

Och. That he permitted it to a man, in case of his wives adultery is apparent out of his words, which we have formerly heard. But whether he did well or ill in permitting the same, that is a thing,

thing, truly, which I would learn of you. Nor do I take you to be so shameless as to say, that he did not well in permitting the same.

Mesch. He did well to permit it.

Och. If he did well to permit it for adultery, it follows, That they do not well, and are contrary to Christ, who deny the same, though a mans wife be an Adultress.

Mesch. They do it to a good intent, that those inconveniences may be avoided, which are wont to spring from Divorces.

Och. If greater inconveniences arise from the allowance, then from the forbidding of Divorce, Christ did ill to permit the same: and they have done well that have forbidden it. But because it were wickedness to say, That Christ did ill

ill to permit it, we must confesse, that they have erred, that forbad it, and that greater inconveniences arise from denying, then from permitting the same. Therefore it is rightly permitted by Christ; seeing of two evils, if one must be chosen, we ought to choose the least. But, let us take this course; do you reckon up the inconveniences, which arise from divorcing wives for Adultery; and I will recount such as spring from forbidding to Divorce them: which evils, being afterwards put into the ballance, one against another, we shall see which are the greater.

Mesch. I am content. And in the first place: If it were lawful for men to put away their wives for Adultery, seeing the number of unchast women is great, there would be a world of divorces, from whence infinite inconveniences would arise.

Och,

Och. In the first place, I believe there are many chast women; and if some prove unchast, I am sure there will be the fewer, if they shall know they may be divorced for adultery, and shall suffer the just penalties thereof. Add hereunto, That I do not say, that a man may put away his Wife for every suspition: no, not if he shall see her play the Adultereresse, with his own eyes: but only, if he shall convict her of adultery, before Judges appointed to hear such cases. Nor is the Husband in such case bound to put her away: nay, but it is lawful for him not only not to put her away in such a case, but to be reconciled to her. Yea, and he is bound to do it, if for some cause (which may sometimes happen) he shall fore-see, that it will be more for the Glory of God, to be reconciled. I add this also, Although the woman be convicted of adultery, yet is it not lawful for the man to Divorce her,

her, and to marry another, without the Magistrates consent, who may sometimes determine, that he shall not Divorce her: as if, for example sake, he fears lest if he should Divorce her, the womans Parents should raise great tumults, and there should be danger of much blood-shed. And therefore, there would not be in this case so many Divorces, as you have intimated.

Mesh. If the Magistrate in such a Case as you have propounded, wou'd not suffer her to be divorced by her Husband, he should then, according to your judgement, go contrary to Christ: and therefore the Husband ought not to obey him.

Och. Nay, but he ought: for he should not go contrary to Christ. For Christ does not *command*, that a man *should* put away his wife for adultery: he only

grants

grants that he *may* do it. And the man ought doubtleſſe to Divorce her, if *that* ſhall tend more to the Glory of God. But if to Divorce be more diſhonourable to God, then not to Divorce, as it is in that Caſe by me propounded, he ought not to Divorce her. The Magiſtrate therefore, is not therein contrary to Chriſt, but agrees with him; and the Husband ought to obey him, and not to Divorce her: becauſe Chriſt would have offences, and the diſhonour of God, avoided.

Meſch. Put the caſe, that it is no diſhonour to God to Divorce her, and the husband believe as much: but the Magiſtrate refuſes, for ſome humane conſideration, having no regard to God: What ſhall the poor Husband do in this caſe?

Och.

Och. Not Divorce her.

Mesch. But what if he shall, contrary to the mind of the Magistrate, Divorce her and marry another?

Och. He shall sin that marries another, and deserves to be punished.

Mesch. Suppose he cannot contain, What shall he then do?

Och. Pray to God to give him the gift of continency.

Mesch. What if God shall not grant his request?

Och. There are divers Remedies. In the first place, let him be reconciled to his wife.

Mesch. What if she be afraid to have to do with him again?

Och.

Och. Let him relate the whole buſineſſe to the Magiſtrate, and make it appear, that he wants the gift of Continence.

Meſch. What if the Magiſtrate will allow him no remedy?

Och. Let him marry another with all poſſible ſecrecy; and, if it happen to come to light, yet can he not juſtly be puniſhed. But, it were better for him, to go into ſome other jurisdiction, where he might be allowed to marry another openly.

Meſch. If Husbands ought to obey the Magiſtrate, in not putting away their Wives, though he unjuſtly forbid them, Why ought they not to obey the Pope, who would have them put away for no cauſe, no not for adultery; notwithſtanding that Precept of his be unjuſt?

Och.

Och. In such a case as I propounded, the Magistrate ought to be obeyed, and not the Pope; and that for this Reason. The authority which Magistrates have, is not contrary to Christ, but agreeable to the will of God: and therefore they ought not by refractorinesse to be contemned, but to be honoured by Obedience. But the authority of the Pope, is point blank contrary to the Authority of Christ; & ought therefore to be contemned and opposed. And, that this is so, I thus demonstrate. The godly and Christian Magistrate, has a power of taking cognizance, whether women accused of adultery, are indeed and in truth Adulteresses, or not. And, in case they shall be lawfully convict of adultery, they have the power of judging, by sundry circumstances, whether it is best they should be divorced, or not. And, in case they may sometimes erre in their

Judge-

Judgement; their authority is not therefore contrary to Christ, as the Popes is; for their business is not to hinder all Divorces, but providently to consider, when they may be allowed, or not allowed; being well assured, that it may often so fall out, that they may be lawful and fitting. But the Popes work is, to prohibit all Divorces, as if to Divorce were never lawful, contrary to the Doctrine of Christ, who taught, That a Wife may lawfully be divorced for adultery; It is therefore fit in this case, to contemn the authority of the Pope, as pernicious and contrary to Christ: and on the other side, to honour the authority of Magistrates, and obey the same, as being useful in it self, and agreeable to the mind of Christ, though they may sometimes abuse the same. But to return to our matter in hand, Do you go on to declare the inconveniences which altered Divorce.

Mesch.

Mesch. When women are not pleased with their Husbands, they will commit adulteries that their Husbands may Divorce them, to the End, that being at their own dispose they may at pleasure marry to other Men.

Och. But this would very seldom happen: In the first place, because they would understand, that possibly they might not be divorced, though they should prove Adultereſſes: Again, because although they were divorced, being made infamous, hardly any men would marry them. Add hereunto, That if just Lawes were in force, they should be put to death, or be at least so punished, as it would be impossible for them to marry.

Mesch. If a Man might put away his Wife for adultery, and marry another, his marrying another wife would shew, that he divorced

vorced the former, not so much because offended with her adultery, as because he was allured by love of the second.

Ochinus.

Holy men can do nothing so uprightly, but that wicked persons may at least calumniate their intentions; yet ought they nevertheless, to persist in that which is right. If Divorce should be exercised for adultery, according to Gods word, when ever it were done, by order of the Magistrate, it would give occasion of offence to no Man. And, if so be nevertheless, some wicked person should by such Divorce, take offence where none was given; it were not therefore just to compel the innocent Husband, to hold society with so wicked a Woman, to his great disgrace and infamy, as in such a case would happen: or to live

ſingle all his life after, whether he were endued with the gift of Continence or not. But, go to; conſider with your ſelf, how many inconveniences have hitherto ariſen upon this ground, *viz.* becauſe it has been wholly forbidden to Divorce for Adultery. In the firſt place, Many men have killed their Wives whom they have taken in Adultery, that they might free themſelves from ſo ſhameleſſe a companion, and have by that means liberty to marry another: which they would not have done, if they might have been allowed to Divorce them. Moreover, many Husbands, offended by their Wives Adultery, and loathing to hold ſociety with them, have given them Poyſon privatly, or have run away from them: and many times the Wives themſelves for fear of death, have abſtained from the ſociety of their Husbands in ſuch caſes: and

and wanting peradventure the virtue of Continency, have committed innumerable crimes: which they had not done, if being made each of them free by Divorce, they might have joyned themselves to some other in Marriage. And these were the fruits of (Sir reverence) those holy Interdictions of the Pope, forbidding Divorce for Adultery, and License to the divorced to marry again.

Meschinus.

As Christ sticks close to his Church, and cannot be separated from her being his Spouse: So, a man ought to cleave unto his Wife, without any possibility of separation.

Ochinus.

Nay rather, As Christ divorced the Jewish Common-wealth, be-

cause she brake her Covenant with him, and had played the Harlot with many Lovers: So a Man may Divorce his Adulteress Wife, and marry another.

Moschinus.

No man marries a Wife to Divorce her.

Ochinus.

Nor does any man marry a Wife, for her to play the Adulteresse.

Mesch.

But all men know, when they marry Wives, that they cannot Divorce them, although they should prove Adulteresses: and they marry them with such a mind as not to Divorce them: Whence it follows, That it is not lawful for them to Divorce them.

Och.

Ochinus.

Seeing it is false, That they may not be divorced for Adultery, and that which is false cannot be known, it follows, That Men when they marry, do not know that their Wives may in no case be divorced. They had indeed such a false perswasion: but their Error being removed, they may lawfully and honestly Divorce them, though, through erroneous perswasion, they promised the contrary.

Meschinus.

You can never reckon up all the causes, for which Divorce ought to be made: and therefore it is better wholly to forbid it.

Ochinus.

Truly you reaſon moſt excellently! juſt as if you ſhould ſay; You ſhall never be able to reckon up all the Cauſes for which men ought to be puniſhed: and therefore 'tis the beſt way to forbid all puniſhment of wicked men. But I, for my part, in the firſt place, do aſſuredly know from the words of Chriſt, That a Wife may be divorced for Adultery. I know likewiſe, that Magiſtrates may, and ought to put in execution theſe Divorces for Adultery, ſo oft as they ſee, it may make to the Glory of God. I know alſo, that Divorce may be made for infidelity, becauſe *Paul* has ſo ſaid.

Meſchinus.

You ſhall never make me believe *that*, while I live.

Ochi-

Ochinus.

Peradventure I may perſwade you nevertheleſſe. But becauſe dinner time is already paſt, and I find my ſtomach crave refreſhment, you ſhall dine with me. After dinner, we ſhall have time enough to conſider, Whether or no, a Man may Divorce his Wife for Infidelity.

Aleſch. Content.

The End.